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A Hamitic Kingdom in the Center of Africa
In Ruanda on the Shores of Lake Kivu (Belgian Congo)

(Un Royaume Hamite au Centre de l'Afrique)
(Au Ruanda sur les Bords du Lac Kivu)
(Congo Belge)

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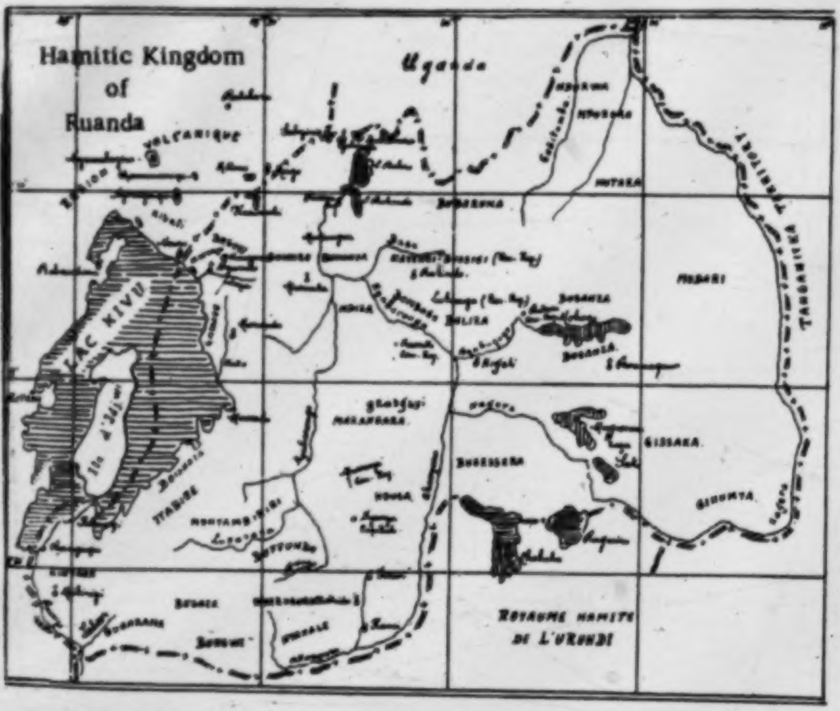
Hamitic Kingdom of Ruanda
Uganda
VOLCANIQUE
LAC KIVU
Ile d'Idjwi
MUTARA
MUBARI
BUGESERA
GISAKA
TANGANYIKA TERRITORY
ROYAUME HAMITE DE L'URUNDI

/20/ Preface

104 Note: When we cite proper names, geographical terms, and
192 other common nouns, we shall write them with the article (1) and the
193 nominal prefix (indicating the singular or plural) (2), which are joined to the word itself as follows:

1. The article (a, i, u), which varies according to word classes, is designated in Runyarwanda works already in existence under the term "euphonic vowel."

2. The nominal prefix, which indicates the singular or plural, also varies according to noun class.

Class	Singular	Plural	Class	Singular	Plural
Class I	mu	ba	Class VI	u	n
II	mu	mi	VII	ka	tu
III	n	n	VIII	bu	ma
IV	ki	bi	IX	ku	ma
V	i	ma	X	ha	ha

Article	Number Singular or Plural	Word Root	Meaning
u	mu	ntu	man
a	ba	ntu	men
u	mu	tutsi	Hamite
a	ba	tutsi	Hamites
a	ba	hutu	serfs (cultivators)

104

192	a	ba	twa	Negrillos
193	u	ru	go	palisade
	i	n	go	palisades

It would be more logical to give only the root itself as follows: /les/ ntu, /les/ tutsi, /les/ hutu and, in the singular, /le/ ntu, /le/ tutsi, /le/ hutu. It would be a matter of habit but the euphony would suffer a little by this.

/21/ A Hamite Kingdom in the Center of Africa

Book I

A Summary Outline of Ruanda and Its Inhabitants

Chapter 1

Physical and Ethnological Make-up of Ruanda. Political, Familial, and Social Organization of Its Inhabitants.

|3| Ruanda is bound to the north by the Protectorate of Uganda which encloses the Bufumbiro, separated from Ruanda in 1912 by the Anglo-Belgian Commission of Delimitation. /22/

To the northeast it is bound by the Kagera, which runs into Lake Victoria.

The Akanyaru River, which delimits Ruanda to the south and southeast does not enclose the Bugessera. That province, situated at the angle formed by the junction of the Akanyaru and the Kagera, was separated from Urundi, to which it used to belong. It is now divided from it by an artificial line. Nor is the Bungwe enclosed by the southern river, which leaves it to the right.

To the west, Ruanda is separated from the Belgian Congo by Lake Kivu along a length of 120 kilometers. To the northwest the volcanic chain forms a natural boundary beyond which are situated, however, two small provinces, the Bgisha, or Gisigari, and the Jomba, which were joined to Belgian Kivu in 1912.

484 [317] [825] Such are the approximate boundaries of Ruanda. This does not prevent its inhabitants from extending their contacts well beyond the circle of their own land. They go as far as Lake Edward to fetch salt, which is collected in the marshes near the lake. There they also

484 purchase the skins of black and white colobus /monkeys/ (inkomo) which
825 are used to make the court outfit (inkindi) so dear to the court pages
(intore).

For a long time the Hamites of Ruanda maintained good neigh-
648 borly relations with the more humble kings of the Karagwe and Uswi,
with whom they exchanged courtesies.

The same did not apply to Urundi, which forms the southern and southeastern border of Ruanda. In spite of their common origins and language, the two lands were frequently at war. Urundi, however, often served as an asylum for people banished from Ruanda.

439 The Banyarwanda /Banyaruanda/ never stopped trading with
the Congo tribes, who supplied them with hoes and rings of vegetable
[301] fiber /23/ called ubutega which are worn by the women around their
legs as ornaments (1).

> 1. Whether black women dress sumptuously or niggardly, they all show a great love of ornaments (Maurice Delafosse).

This fiber is taken from a small tree (intunda) which grows only in Masisi territory. Its purchase gives rise to constant comings and goings between that territory and Ruanda. The bark of yet another plant called isiha is used to make rings of lesser quality which are not as much in demand.

436 Butega are looked upon as ornaments and riches, and they are
used as currency. The Banyarwanda, lake-shore dwellers and neigh-
651 bors of Masisi, were assessed in butega as taxpayers. Every year each
clan had to supply several thousand to the queen mother, who used
them for herself, her /female/ attendants, and her slaves.

301 It is not unusual to meet Batutsi ladies wearing hundreds of
rings around their legs. These ornaments are piled on each other up
[481] to the knees, and lend their wearers a slow and very ungraceful gait.

[556] A wealthy woman's wardrobe includes several thousand butega.
Their purchase occasions indebtedness which frequently gives rise to
[691] lengthy lawsuits and disputes.

648 The kings of Ruanda also headed numerous expeditions into the Congo with no definite results other than pillage.

133 [137] As a whole, Ruanda is a high, rolling plateau. It was deforested to get rid of wild beasts and to supply pastures and fields for cultivation.

The northwest is a broken, picturesque, wooded region. There stands the chain of volcanoes, practically all of which are extinct today. /24/

The highest peaks are the Karisimbi (1), which is 4, 506 meters high; the Mikeno (2), or Mukuru mubi (3), which is 4, 380 meters high; the Muhabura (4), which is 4, 127 meters high; the Sabyinyo (5), which

[103 301] 1. Karisimbi, from the word amassimbi, a kind of white shell which the Batutsi of Urundi and Ruanda wear at the neck as an ornament. Because of its color it served to designate the snow that covers the summits, and by extension the highest mountain.

[103] 2. Mikeno, from the verb gukena, "to be bare."

[103] 3. Mukuru mubi, "a peak of difficult access."

[103 487] 4. Muhabura, from the verb guhabura, "to set on the right path," because this mountain serves as a landmark for travelers.

[103] 5. Sabyinyo, "big-toothed father," owing to its volcanic ridges.

133 103 is 3, 647 meters high; the Mago (6), which is 3, 711 meters high; the Gahinga (7), which is 3, 474 meters high; etc.

Father Paul Barthélemy, the founder of the Nyundo mission in the Bugoyi, was the first to climb the Karisimbi. This is why the name of Barthelemy peak is given on some maps to the highest peak.

The Mikeno, which had until now been regarded as inaccessi-
133 ble, has had its impregnability violated by daring explorers (8). Each of its two slender points ends in an immense and nearly vertical rock, from 300 to 400 meters high.

The so-called "Plain of the Volcanoes" extends between the Rutchuru and Lake Kivu. It is strewn with blocks of lava and hundreds of craters of varying size.

Among the active volcanoes, let us mention the Nyiragongo (3, 496 meters) of perfectly classic shape. The /25/ main crater, with

6. It is found wrongfully designated under the name of Visoke on some maps. /Visoke/ is a derivation of the term *Bisoko*, which is the name of the region itself.

7. *Gahinga*, "the little summit."

8. During the summer of 1927, on July 25, Fathers Van Hoef and Depluet and Mr. and Mrs. Leonard succeeded in surmounting all obstacles by using a rope and a small ladder. They reached the southern peak, which is separated from the other by an abyss. The summit forms a sloping esplanade covered with volcanic gravel.

133 a chimney opening at the bottom (1), has a diameter of about 400 meters.

> 1. In 1912 there were two juxtaposed chimneys. The wall that divided them disappeared in 1915.
>
> The column of smoke, which was rather light between the years 1908 and 1926, thickened in January, 1927 and may be seen from afar.

Its neighbor to the right, the Nyamlagira (3, 056 meters), is more active. The mouth of the volcano is nearly 2, 000 meters in diameter.

Lava in fusion is constantly boiling in four or five small chimneys scattered along part of the old crater. It exudes fumaroles /sic/ and sulphurous vapors. The volcano called Mugunga or Ntsuro, not far from Lake Kivu, still emits some occasional vapors. Its eruption is of recent date, since it revived at the end of December, 1912.

Let us still mention the Bwana-Mahalage, which is nearly lost among blocks of lava. It erupted twice between 1903 and 1905, and since then has given no signs of life.

Its crater is now almost completely obstructed, and its diameter is insignificant.

In places where lava has begun to desintegrate, as happened
[134] in the Bugoyi plain, which extends northeast of Lake Kivu, the soil
is quite fertile.

The aspect of the land is imposing and pleasant to gaze at.
The lake with its islands, the high peaks that block the horizon to
the north, the plain strewn with craters, and the active volcanoes
[132] make it an area unsurpassed in scenic value. The climate is temper-
134 ate and the soil rich. It is volcanic soil that keeps disintegrating with-
241 out ever being exhausted. One finds in the fields sorghum, peas,
beans, sweet potatoes, and eleusine. Edible arum is rare and so is
manioc, but potatoes and wheat are becoming increasingly wide-
spread. The soils of Byahi and Riverere are most propitious to the

134 cultivation of the famous *plante médicée* /Tr.: "Medici plant"/
241 (tobacco), the sale of which provides a living for a number of families. /26/

The vast Rwrere plain covers nearly half of the Bugoyi province.
133 Not a spring or brook is to be found there. The rain water immediately
312 drains beneath the lava, which is covered by a mere 50 or 60 centimeters of arable soil. The inhabitants are compelled to cover distances varying between 10 and 20 kilometers, round trip to draw water from the brooks of the Sebeya or the Mutura. During the rainy season, they carefully save the water that collects in the crags of rocks or in small moats dug by each person around his dwelling. The owners of banana groves use the water held by the thicker husks of the banana trees. These are split lengthwise with a knife, and produce water lightly mixed with potash. The natives get used to drinking this liquid without any repugnance.

The Bagoyi who live in the mountainous area are better off than the plains people as far as water is concerned.

The northern area, called Bigogo, consists entirely of pastures.
133 It is inhabited by the herding Batutsi, who own numerous herds of cattle, the wealth of the country.

These same lands of volcanic origin, gave birth to a beautiful
[137] forest where bamboo grows along with some rare species of trees. It spreads east of Kivu in a north-south direction.

[311] The natives, ever in search of fertile fields and charcoal, have made terrible inroads into it. This is why large gaps are to be found in it.

The central and eastern provinces, the Nduga, Bwana-Mkali,
Gissaka, Buganza, etc., are made up of long rolling hills, nearly
[311] always separated by small valleys which are often transformed into marshes and which are very useful for summer planting.

The Buliza, Bussigi, and Luhanga are long plateaus where numerous herds of goats, sheep, and cows graze. These areas lie at an altitude of about 2,200 meters. /27/

Ruanda also has lakes, the most important of which is Kivu, which is 120 kilometers long and from 40 to 50 kilometers wide.

133 Then there are in order of size: Mohazi in the Buganza, Mugessera and Sake in the Gissaka, Ruhondo (at an altitude of 1,750 meters) and Bolero (at 1,065 meters) in Mulera, and Karago in Lwankeri plain.

In the Bugessera there are several ponds: Murago, Mirayi, Kagomasi, Chohoha, Gaharwa, Kilimbi, etc. The small land of Bgiriri, which is adjacent to Gissaka toward the south, includes Birira /pond/.

The two rivers that wind through Ruanda are: the Nyabarongo /Nyawarongo/ (1) and the Akanyaru (2). The former, to which

[103] 1. Nyabarongo, from the verb *kulongora*, *kulongoroka*, "to go far away." This river was called thus because it flows throughout Ruanda.

[103] 2. Akanyaru, from the verb *kunyaruka*, "to rush." The speed of its flow gave rise to this name.

Mr. Kandt, the last German resident, gave the name of *Caput Nili* ("Source of the Nile") in a well-known book, is formed by the junction of two rivers, the Mwogo (3) and the Lukarara.

[823] 3. The violence of its flow and the volume of its waters during the rainy season occasion numerous tragic accidents, hence the expression: "*Mwogo*! Thou doth not kill men, thou only taketh away those who come (of their own accord) to meet death," *Mwogo! ntiwich' abantu, wicha abakwizaniye*. [539]

133 These two torrents have their source in the southwestern part of Ruanda. Their headwaters flow impetuously on a bed littered with rocks and pebbles.

Among the many subsidiaries of the Nyabarongo, let us mention in alphabetic order: the Base, Mukungwa (which comes out of Lake Ruhondo), Nyabugogo, which serves as an outlet for Lake Mohazi, etc.

The Akanyaru, whose basin is less extensive, also originates in the southwest and combines its waters with those of the Nyabarongo at the level of theBugessera. /28/

After they join, these two rivers change their name to Kagera (1). Under this new name they enter the Victoria into which they pour their yellow waters loaded with silt.

Lake Kivu receives only a small part of the waters of Ruanda. Its outlet is the Ruzizi River, which flows into /Lake/ Tanganyika after a tumultuous course of about 120 kilometers.

131 Ruanda, whose surface may be estimated at 30, 000 to 35, 000 square kilometers boasts a population that is believed to reach two
161 million souls.

563 It is made up of three quite distinct ethnic groups: the Batutsi, or Hamites, the Bahutu of the Bantu group, and the Batwa, or Negrillos (Pygmies).

141 The Batutsi, who are thought to be of Egyptian or Abyssinian origin, (2) are tall in stature. Some measure as much as 2 or even

[103] 1. Kagera. This word comes from the verb kugera, "to deepen."

[136] The Kagera slowly wanders through the plain, and its lazy waters overflow into large ponds and marshes infested with crocodiles and mosquitoes.

000 2. From an ethnological point of view the physical appearance of the Ethiopian people is an exception in

050 Africa, owing as much to the sum of characteristics that determine it as to its originality. These people of indeterminate race are apparently of Indo-European origin, in view of their regular features and general physical appearance. The brown color of their skin is but the result of subsequent darkening under the action of the sun. If their external appearance were not sufficient to reveal the infusion of Aryan blood, the local dialects (Geez, or Old Ethiopian, and Amharic, for which linguistic experts find Iranian origins) would confirm this commonly accepted opinion. In any event, their Semitic origin cannot be questioned. (Pierre Alype, L'Empire des Négus /The Empire of the Negusses/, pp. 22-23.)

This same author adds that "the Ethiopian civilization, which originated in the Arabic peninsula and moved to Africa with Yemenites at a very early time, developed in contact with the Egyptian civilization, on which it left a mark in turn" (pp. 23-24).

Pierre Alype mentions the name of an Ethiopian king, Sebacos, who, according to historians (Herodotus being foremost among them), conquered Egypt and occupied it for a long time. Others speak of another prince of the same race, Taharka, who governed Egypt as well as Ethiopia

080 800 years before our era. To him is attributed the erection of the lotus column in the Temple of Karnak.

[141] 2.10 meters. /29/

142 They[h] have well-proportioned limbs, regular features, a straight nose, thin lips, and they present striking resemblances to the Egyptian Pharaohs. Like Ethiopians, the Batutsi are characterized by a brown complexion with reddish undertones, at least in some types, and by a somewhat elongated oval face.

157 Usually gay, they are easily approachable and impress others with their noble, slightly haughty but polite manner.

141 While the average stature of the Batutsi is estimated at 1.79 meters, that of the Bahutu is 1.67 meters. The latter are stockier and shorter, with less regular features. Their muscular strength is 147 greater than that of their masters, no doubt because of the heavy work they perform.

152 577 As a whole, the Bahutu are less appealing, less polite, and shier than the Batutsi. When angry they cannot control themselves as well as the latter, but on the other hand they are simpler and have more rigid mores (1).

515 181 1. Most of the great chiefs are polygamous or keep concubines in their many domains. The simpler Hamitic herders, who are in the majority, are usually monogamous and of a sterling moral character equaling that of the Bahutu. One might even add that those who lead a pastoral life could give the Bahutu advice in matters of decency.

h[i.e., the Batutsi - Analyst]

[141] The average stature of the Batwa, or Negrillos, does not ex-
142 ceed 1.59 meters. Short and stocky, rather poorly proportioned, they
tend to have ungraceful bodies. They are hairy; their chest especially
presents a large surface of hair. Prognathism is more pronounced
among them than among the Bahutu. They are also less sensitive to
147 cold and fatigue, at least those who live in the woods, for they are
used to privation and to the inclemency of the seasons.

[165] Their vigor and longevity are now proverbial. This is why the
551 Batutsi and Bahutu like to give their children Batwa names, such as
Mutwa, Gatwa, /30/ Lwamukore, Sekarahenyi, etc., as if they
could infuse the physical traits of that race into them along with the
757 names (1). Any bone, so long as it has belonged to a Negrillo, is
826
reputed to be a sovereign remedy for an infirmity called makonyora,
which is one of the aftermaths of yaws.

[751] Little bones of this sort are worn around the neck as amulets.

The Bahutu faith in this kind of grigri goes further. Until
789 recently, they believed all that was needed to improve the yield of a
field was to throw a Negrillo's finger into it, hence the word ilemo
("creation," that is, "fertility") given to this sort of object, and the
word kulemesha ("to fertilize") referring to the procedure.

563 The way of life, habits, and temperament of the Negrillos in
no way resemble those of the other ethnic groups (2). The Batutsi are

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1. In the same line of thought and for similar reasons, the Blacks often bear the names of certain animals such as the hyena, lion, dog, etc.

144 2. Prehistorians and physical anthropologists "have scientifically proved that the dwarfs, or pygmies, who have been found at all times in some parts of Africa, belong to a human race distinct from the Blacks.
142 Not only are they, on the average,

142

> lighter in color and smaller in size than most Negroes, but in addition they are differentiated from them by a number of other physical characteristics, notably a greater disproportion in the relative size of head, trunk, and limbs. Scientists refuse to call them 'dwarfs,' a term applying to exceptional individuals within a given race and not to a race as a whole. They reject the term 'pygmies,' which stands in our minds for extreme smallness of stature as an essential and predominant characteristic, [141] while the men in question, although rarely taller than 1.55 meters, usually do not stand less than 1.40 meters tall. They were given the name of 'Negrillos'." (Maurice Delafosse, Les Noirs de l'Afrique /The Black Peoples of Africa/, p. 8.)

563 first and foremost a herding people. When they have neither hills nor villages to administer, they apply themselves almost exclusively to pastoral occupations.

233 556 181 This is their favorite vocation. /31/ Cows mean more to them than anything else. A large herd of cattle is a badge of honor and a sign of wealth. In all truth it may be said that they have an adoration, a passion for cattle. They think and talk of nothing but steers and cows. Their dream, therefore, is to own as many of them as possible. In agreement with the axiom stating that "the lips speak of what is dearest to the heart," they have invented a salutation to express this secret desire of their hearts.

576 Amashyo!, that is to say, "May thou come to own a large number of herds!" says the worthier man. The other replies, Amashongore!, "May you come to own many cows!"

233 In the course of time they have managed to spread around them this fever for owning cattle. Any Muhutu /singular of Bahutu/ considers himself fortunate if he comes to own a cow. One wonders if it might not be the Batutsi who brought cattle into Ruanda. It is certain that their beeves are distinguished from the others by the length of their horns, which sometimes measure up to one meter, and that they are quite similar to the cows drawn on Egyptian monuments.

The hypothesis according to which the Batutsi originated in the land of the Pharaohs does not fail to take this fact into account.

One must agree that the Batutsi know a lot about raising cattle. They are familiar with a good number of its diseases and the treatment they require. When one sees the care they give to their cows, one is tempted to believe that they have retained some of the religious veneration which their possible ancestors lavished on the Apis bull.

They cannot bear to see their animals mishandled. Rather than kill one, they will let a sick beast fall to the ground, or a senile one die a natural death.

The dung of these animals, which trained servants collect
237 every morning, is carefully deposited by hand outside the ficus-tree
[351] enclosure and in time forms an odorous forewall around a large and
frequently swept square. /32/ Even their urine is used to rinse the
[356] wooden vessels in which milk is stored. Needless to say that in contact with the acid the white liquid acquires a flavor which is not to everyone's taste and turns sour within a short time.

The Bahutu are cultivators first and foremost. They make up
241 the bulk of the population, at least eight tenths of it. While the
563 Batutsi, who subsist exclusively on the raising of cattle, settle near
361 pastures, preferably on the highlands, on plateaus, and at the edge
of the forest, the Bahutu settle in places where it is possible to cultivate the land, especially in the midst of their banana groves when they own some.

Their Food is Varied

It consists of beans, peas, and sweet potatoes. They cultivate
262 [241] a lot of sorghum, eleusine, and maize. In some areas one finds
Caribbean cabbage or edible arum (amatcke), yam (ébikoro), squash
and pumpkins, of which the people are fond. Among the mountain
[263] people, honey is also consumed in large quantities. Elsewhere, the
Muhutu /sing. of Bahutu/ brings honey to the Mututsi /sing. of Batutsi/,
[272] who demands it as a due and uses it to make hydromel (inkangaza and
intoramo), the favorite beverage of the nobles.

The banana, which the Munyarwanda /sing. of Banyarwanda/
[273] frequently mixes with his other foods, supplies him primarily with
a beer that is in great demand (inzoga y'urwagwa).

The Banyarwanda, in order to lend taste and flavor to their
263 everyday food and to their favorite dishes, add to them bitter plants
or sour, tart fruits, which they cook along with them (1). Housewives
also use water containing a little potash /33/, which takes the place
258 263 of the missing salt. The Blacks draw this mediocre seasoning from
the ashes of plants that grow in the marshes (1). These grasses are
burned after being dried in the sun. The ashes are then collected in
a large potsherd upon which the humble African salt makers pour pure

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[824] 1. Among all these plants, issogi is the one most commonly used. The shrubs that bear the berries most valued for their bitter taste are intagashya and igitagarasoryo.

[824] 1. The natives call these grasses by the name of umuberanyi, umurago, and igikangaga. The ashes of the last-mentioned plant are most commonly used.

258 263 water, which overflows into a jar, carrying with it a few more or less soluble particles of this sooty dust. The liquid is preserved. The cooks pour a little into the cooking pot at every meal. Some families subsist on this humble vocation and trade with water which is not salted but which has an ashy taste.

Salt was indeed rare before the arrival of the Europeans. The great Batutsi chiefs were about the only ones able to obtain it.

This salt, collected by the Blacks in the marshes of Lake Edward, contained an amount of earth and sand at least equal to half its volume. It sold nevertheless for a very high price at native markets.

The salt from the Gottorp plant (not far from Kigoma) is now used by all social strata. It is highly valued by the Banyarwanda, who call it *ulugera*, a substantive derived from the verb *kugera*, which means "to penetrate," because, as they say, it goes all the way down to their stomachs thanks to its high quality and its tart and pungent flavor. One understands why formerly the Blacks, when deprived of salt, would seek out bitter herbs and sour fruits. Red pepper and [249] chives, which were imported fairly recently, have for this reason been a great success among the Blacks, who cultivate them in small plots near their huts. It is probably for the same reason that children show almost as much fondness for lemons as for oranges. /34/ A few years after the eruption referred to as that of the Ntsuro (December, 1911 and January, 1912), when the natives were able to approach the volcano safely, they began collecting salt mixed with large quantities of earth. The inhabitants of nearby villages spend most of their time collecting the indispensable substance. In order to rid the salt of its [415] impurities, people melt it in large wooden troughs full of water, which are called *imivule* or *imizinga*. The liquid is then removed to other troughs where it is exposed to the sun. The most skillful and enterprising workers allow the water to boil until it evaporates completely. The markets which are held north of Kivu are supplied with this salt, which sells as high as that of Gottorp in spite of its poor quality. It is less white, contains impurities, and always remains damp.

241 461 563 The Batwa, or Negrillos, do not farm much. They look down on field work.

241 To them, this labor is almost taboo (1). They are divided in
323 two categories, the potters and the hunters. The former settle in
Bahutu villages but live apart. They work with clay, a task which
everyone else gladly leaves to them. They get foodstuffs in exchange
for their vessels.

The hunters prefer the solitude of the forest. They are the
224 true children of the woods, and "milk" the forest in every way, as
[195] though it were their cow, to repeat a familiar expression /35/ of
theirs. They live on the game they kill.

They are very fond of meat and tirelessly track elephants, buffalo, antelopes, gazelles, the large tailless, clawless rats called

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461 1. Extensive fields of peas are to be seen among the Batwa of the Bugoyi, who live at the edge of the forest. Should one see this as a new state of affairs caused by the deep changes which have upset or transformed their former way of life?

It is certain that the hunting grounds of the Pygmies are not as extensive as they used to be. The forest dwindles imperceptibly but surely as the Bahutu, in search of new fields, gnaw at it incessantly with their axes. It must also be said that the Negrillos can no longer plunder and rob as they used to do. European penetration is largely responsible for stopping this source of income. In order to support themselves, the Batwa have begun to farm out of necessity, like the Bahutu.

224 inkezi, and monkeys (1), whose flesh they eat. This ^ makes them

[825] 1. Only the chimpanzee (impndu) and the gorilla (ingagi) escape the cooking pot because, as the Pygmies say with a shade of malice, "they were formerly our peers (ngo n'abatwa bachu) and only with time have they degenerated and turned into animals (ngo zahinduts' inyamaswa)!" [783]

most "impure" in the eyes of the others. They handle bows and wooden [411] arrows with great skill. Although they are always on the watch for game, they cannot derive all their subsistance from it. The plants and wild roots of the forest are not sufficient either. In former times, [579] they used to hold for ransom those travelers who had the temerity to cross their domain, and they raided the Bahutu fields. Now that 463 European authorities have put an end to these acts of pillage, they have found new sources of revenues in the making of ropes, baskets, and bows, which they sell in the villages or take to market. One may no longer say of the Negrillos of Ruanda that they are still at the "gathering stage." They have been beyond it for an indeterminate period of time.

563 646 The great Batutsi chiefs like to have a few Batwa around them and use them chiefly as litter bearers. Many of them live at the capital where they are used in various capacities as guards and watchmen. Executioners are recruited among them. They like to exercise this function, for they keep the victims' remains.

It must be added that they showed unequaled cruelty in the exercise of this horrible function. The screams of the victims aroused no pity in them. European penetration has fortunately put an end to this dismal vocation.

224 [342] The Negrillos live in very primitive huts made of branches, /38/ which do not provide complete protection against the inclemency of the seasons or wild animals. The latter do not usually arouse much fear in them, since they are familiar with their habits and lairs.

^ [i.e., the eating of unclean meats by the Batwa. -[illegible]]

224 They[1] climb trees like squirrels to escape danger or to be on the lookout. [48] They may spend a week or even two without returning home when tracking game, especially if an elephant is at stake. The wooded area is their domain. They know its thickets and crannies, and they track animals everywhere, stealthily through thorns and scrub, without ever running the risk of getting lost.

361 423 Pygmies live in groups of six or seven families scattered through the forest, which they have divided up like family property by settling their respective boundaries so as not to get in each other's way.

[578] Hunting in a forbidden zone or even in a contested one has given rise to more than one bloody quarrel among brothers and friends.

There are hardly 15 of such groups of Negrillo hunters, who would find it hard to subsist if meat were their only food.

311 Willfully set fires for clearing purposes which have impoverished the forested land, as well as new political conditions which are gradually transforming the society, contribute to the dwindling of their food resources.

Soon, therefore, we may see the last representatives of those woodsmen join their other compatriots, the potters scattered through the Bahutu villages, or else start farming as some of them are already doing.

563 The Batwa live as a group apart. They do not mix with the Bahutu and much less with the Batutsi. They are a despised caste.

631 Ruanda was not politically united from the beginning. In the following pages we shall see that it was parceled /37/ into a considerable number of tiny kingdoms and small independent principalities. The lands inhabited for the longest time seem to have been the Ndorwa, Buganza, Gissaka, and Bugesera in the northeast, the Nduga and Munyambiriri in the center, and the Bwana-Mkali in the southeast. The areas located in the northwest, the Mulera, Bugoyi, Bgisha, Kanage, etc., were slowly won over the forest and settled by people who came from neighboring regions.

642 Politically, Ruanda is an absolute monarchy.

The Banyarwanda belong to the type of society that is "more stratified, characterized by the establishment of a centralized power whose automatically binding warrants are transmitted to the humblest

[1] [i.e., the Batwa. - Analyst]

642 individuals through a continuous chain of lesser chiefs." This regime resulted from the invasion and conquest of Ruanda [illegible] the Hamites. The monarchical system was introduced by them in order "to keep the subject people within a very tight administrative network." (1) According to the classification adopted by Deniker (2), the Banyarwanda belong in their degree of culture to the first group by the Bahutu and Batwa, but it is also proper to place them in the second category on account of the Hamites, who gave their conquered subjects an organization superior to that of the peoples in the first stage and a higher degree of culture. They form an intermediate group between the first two divisions of this classification.

643 The land is governed by a king with unlimited and hereditary powers (we are speaking of the past). The symbol of royalty is a drum, a sacred object, a sort of palladium referred to as *Kalinga*. /38/

Like all African potentates, the Hamitic prince formerly held powers of life and death over his subjects. Everything belonged to him in his own right, lands and people, crops and livestock. He
631 would designate the dignitaries and the provincial governors, who were almost invariably chosen from the ranks of the Batutsi, the noble and conquering race.

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1. *Les Relations entre l'évolution sociale et l'évolution religieuse* /The Relations between Social and Religious Evolution/ by Rev. Fr. Pinard de la Boullaye, S. J. (*Correspondant*, January 25, 1929.)

2. *Races et peuples de la terre* /Races and Peoples of the Earth/, 1900, p. 151.
Deniker divides peoples into savage, semicivilized, and civilized.

631 These in turn would select their own assistants, who became "hill chiefs." The great chiefs, although they owned a number of dwellings in their respective districts, seldom lived among their people.

[662] Ever surrounded by jealous and often malevolent rivals, they were exposed to intrigues. Espionage and delation were endemic at court. This is why the great dignitaries remained by the king's side in order to guard against all eventualities.

643 Hamitic royalty, once it became powerful, immediately acquired great brilliance: United under a single scepter, the Banyarwanda became one of the best-organized Negro peoples and spread beyond their natural boundaries to defeat and subject to tribute the enemy nations around them. The union of the Bahutu clans took place thanks to the increasingly centralized administrative organization of the new inhabitants.

The Hamitic kings never lost the simplicity of their ancient mores. They kept up their interest in their herds of cattle, which they regularly asked to see, and they would ask and remember the names and genealogy of the animals. On the battlefields they were hardly distinguishable from their warriors, whose outfit and weapons they wore: a mere goatskin around the loins, a spear, a bow and arrows.

644 In peacetime, however, etiquette would elevate the monarch and isolate him from his subjects. One could not visit him without asking for an audience and being announced first. This was so at least as far as common people were concerned, for dignitaries and favorites acted with greater freedom and even took certain liberties. According to court protocol, one had /39/ to clap hands (*gukom' amashi*) when appearing before the monarch.

The "lords" would throng around him to fill out the government offices and to make up the court (1). Not only were princes of royal

1. "The Hamitic Court!" In dealing with the persons and times whose history we are describing, one must not think of the courts established in civilized countries. The Batutsi Court does not

644 resemble them much. It would be difficult, however, to call by another word the group of personages and servants who make up the entourage, followers, and retinue of these African potentates.

blood and dignitaries for the most part of Hamitic race and blood admitted to the court, but so were men whom the king introduced there directly. Among them were found, although in small numbers, commoners, foreigners, and even more rarely some Batwa whose status had been raised on account of their services or their skill in sorcery.

It was an art to arrive and to remain for them all.

644 662 The king inspired in his entourage a very humble respect mixed with a constant fear. Uncertainty as to what his dignified but slightly haughty manner held in store for them constantly worried these ambitious people.

They would, therefore, watch with apprehension the changes on his august face, which occasionally betrayed his most intimate feelings and his most sudden decisions, although most often it remained inscrutable.

A quick flash of wrath in his eyes portended disgrace and possibly death. A bright smile on his austere face caused radiant hopes to blossom.

These abrupt and capricious changes, which might dispose of one's future or even of one's life, constantly held souls in suspense between fear that makes one shudder and peace as refreshing as a breath of fresh air.

Yet, although one lived in anxious uncertainty, one tried to reassure oneself by saying that the king was too just to ignore virtue and honesty.... Although this integrity of the heart as expressed by words /40/ could strengthen the position of a courtier who had already arrived, however, how could it suffice to single out the aspiring courtier, whose qualities were hardly known as yet? In order to succeed, to find a patron willing to introduce a novice and sufficiently enterprising to draw the king's glance and heart toward him, it was sometimes necessary to arouse and maintain the protector's interest by way of attentions which might be more or less discreet, but which were always significant.

The gift you are offered broadens the path.
And leads you to the presence of the great.

When fortune was slow to smile, this was no cause for discouragement. There is an art of knowing how to wait.

But waiting does not mean inaction. A besieged city always ends up surrendering. One must undertake the siege of the king (1).

Patience costs ambitious people nothing, no matter how eager they may be to reach their goal. The chief occupation of the great and the parvenu was to dabble in politics, to plot intrigues, to flatter the king, and to increase their personal wealth. They owned lands and cattle, which they managed with care.

They followed the king on his moves so as not to lose his favor, so as to ward off the maneuvers of their enemies and profit from the crumbs that might fall from the royal table.

They would all make their way to the monarch, jolt each other to be near him and to have a choice place at his side.

Not one of them wished to leave.

They wanted to live at the capital, under the eyes of the master who dealt out influence and promotion. Court life and gossip were filled with the intrigues of the envious, with rivalries, "the bitter competition for power, the plots to win and keep favor, /41/ the treacherous insinuations of enemies who harried one another with hatred and decency /sic/, the brutal passions satisfied at any cost,"

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1. "La Cour royale et les classes sociales au temps de David et de Solomon /The Royal Court and Social Classes at the Time of David and Solomon/," by Louis Desnoyers. (Correspondant, July 25, 1927.)

644 with flagrant disgraces and the official executions that sometimes
662 resulted from them.

People became madly infatuated with everything abnormal or enigmatic, with the predictions of sorcerers, with ghosts, crimes, sudden or mysterious death.

And since the regular court attendants had a thorough knowledge of their neighbors' genealogy, past, history, acquaintances, and interests, it is easy to guess that the daily chronicle also concerned private quarrels, bereavements, marriages, and births. This was the usual pabulum of conversation. Similar in this respect to a certain French king who associated largely with lowly people, fortunetellers, astrologists, apothecaries, wig makers, and even the executioner, the Hamitic monarch also liked to surround himself with master cooks, archiaters, healers, magicians, and charlatans of all sorts to whom he occasionally distributed honors and appointments (1).

(1). Some striking examples of those royal favors are known. Some subjects in most humble circumstances managed to obtain the hand of a Hamitic princess and to be raised to noble rank.

One can easily imagine what the royal administration was like
643 under the circumstances. No desire to encourage the arts, to favor
661 agriculture, to improve the people's condition. The rights of the people exist theoretically, but they are regulated by no organic text and are too often dependent on the whims of royal and local power.

Infatuated with their own glory and exclusively preoccupied with their own pleasure, the sovereigns had no ambition other than to raise their prestige and to enjoy life.

The kings did not resemble one another from one reign to the next.

A warrior would succeed a peaceful man. Some, cruel and brutal, had the bloody whims and disordered passions of despots and degenerates. Others, of /42/ simpler tastes, led a peaceful existence and allowed the people to breathe.

643 661 One hears of sovereigns who liked and practiced the "things of the mind," such as Yuhi-Mazimpaka, whose literary output is still highly prized by Black intellectuals.

644 The king's wives and concubines lived away from the court. "Either he had noticed their beauty himself..., or their charms had been brought to his attention by the great who were sure to please him in so doing."

Among the reasons for the profusion of wives in the sovereign's harem, "the yearnings of the heart and the demands of the senses both played their part" above all else. Many a prince surrendered without restraint to voluptuous activities. Yet one hears of some romances adorned with the charms of literature which may actually have taken place.

842 It must be admitted in all fairness that a powerful idea presided over the establishment of the family among the Hamites. Like the Hebrews and so many other ancient peoples, the Batutsi regarded large numbers of children, and especially sons, as an honor, a glory, and a source of strength. They considered themselves fortunate if they could watch the growth of their children and their children's children to the third and fourth generations.

595 578 A large progeny seemed to them a sure guarantee for the future of their race. Let us add that peace could not reign in their homes. For among the legitimate wives, there was almost invariably a favorite. "Competing among themselves, competing for their children, they drove the latter to rivalry, and the husband, following his preferences or giving way to his weakness, did not always share equitably his heart, his favors, and his goods." (1) /43/

1. The loved wife is called nkundwakazi, the hated wife mbikazi. A rival is called mukeba or umugore w'ishyari, that is to say, literally, "jealously woman /or wife/."

595 One can easily imagine the troubles and conflicts caused by an excessive number of wives and children.

The history of the Hamitic princes of Ruanda contains "pages soiled and as if bloodied by the tale of passions which set them one against the other and which, unleashed with brutal violence, " eventually gave rise to tragedies and palace revolutions. Family unity and family spirit have never gained anything from polygamy. The history of the Hamites of Ruanda is here to prove and confirm this.

644 The king's mother held first place among the harem princesses, and reigned along with her son. She was "shown the most respectful consideration, and whoever wished to obtain some favor from the monarch had no better recourse than to see her first. "

157 643 It has been said that a people must be well disciplined in order to grow prosperous and powerful. The Hamites' strength resided in their courage and organization.

Those who know the Hamites cannot but admire among their qualities perseverance in an undertaking and obedience to chiefs. One must recognize in these political and diplomatic beings, and this is to their credit, a thorough self-possession and great calmness. As true leaders, they rarely give way to anger, and their violent feelings rarely show.

868 Their apprenticeship to life begins early.

From childhood on, indeed, the young Batutsi devote themselves to real exercises in sports, under the supervision of the Mwami or of the great chiefs. They practice endurance and bravely bear the fatigue of the lengthy and frequent exercises of guhamiriza (dances indigenous to the Batutsi). For many years they remain as pages (intore) in the service of the Mwami or of the provincial governors, in order to be trained to life and to win the favors of currently powerful figures. /44/

Chapter 2

Familial and Social Organization (continued).
Clans. Family Life and Traditions. Mentality and Psychology.
Character and Temperament of the Africans.
Intelligence, Ability, and Perfectibility of the Blacks.
Africa, the Cradle of the Aurignacian Civilization.

614 The Banyarwanda, whether Batutsi, Bahutu, or Batwa, are grouped into tribes or clans whose names they bear. They lead a patriarchal life. The northwestern regions are those where the concept of the clan has retained all its force and all its importance. The members of a clan pool their interests, their joys, and their revenges.

The exclusiveness of the clans is rigorous. It was in those same regions that the invasion of the Batutsi was opposed most vigorously. One may wonder how this separation into clans originated.

As they evolved, the three ethnic groups, Batutsi, Bahutu, and Batwa, each adopted the name of one or the other of their ancestors in order to be distinguished from other families with the same origin. This caused the parceling of the tribes.

The Basiete, who became Batutsi only recently, claim to be descended from their ancestor Busiete, who was of Mutwa /sing of Batwa/ origin and who was raised to noble rank by Yuhi III Gahindiro.

Among the Batutsi, it is the Banyiginya, Bega, Balejuru, and Bakongori who claim to have come down from heaven.

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592 The clan or tribe is nothing more than the extended lineage. "The family, thus constituted, did not remain limited to father, mother, children, and servants.... It grew larger. The spirit of solidarity which united its various members, strengthened by the necessities of time, keeps the various branches attached to the trunk. The younger brothers and their progeny remain grouped around the eldest, from whom they continue to receive a central guidance." /45/

614 [592] This enlarged family, which comprises the younger brothers and their children, the cousins and servants attached to the household (1), takes the name of umulyango, which has the same meaning as mesnie from the Latin mansionata, "household." Eventually the tribe became too large and split up. Each subtribe then took the name of the new chief while retaining as a reminder the name of the common ancestor. In other words, the major clans divided as time went on and remained bound to the mother tribe under a new name.

The Bagwabiro of Bugoyi are descended from a Migwabiro rain maker who belonged to the Muhutu /sing. of Bahutu/ clan of the Basinga.

173 614 He left his village of Suti (Munyambiriri), and, after a vain attempt at colonization in the Kinyaga, settled in the Bugoyi during the reign of Chyilima II Ludjugira, around 1700 or thereabouts. He was reunited there with his son Macchumu, who played an important role in the fight against the famous "Mutes," or "men with an incomprehensible tongue."

614 A change of territory, a raise to the noble ranks, an important role played in some event, the holding of a post at court, etc., such were some of the motives that determined the creation of new clans. In the following pages, we shall describe many examples of such recent formations.

We shall now provide a brief list of clans.

1. Batutsi Ethnic Group

a) The two major clans:
   Abanyiginya, from which the royal family originated.
   Abega.

b) The secondary clans:
   Abatsobe (Gatsobe, Nyirarutsobe).
   Abaha, which came from the Uha.

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1. Funck-Brentano, L'Ancien Régime /The Old Regime/, p. 15.

614 Abasinga, Abagessera, Abasiete, etc. /46/

2. Bahutu Ethnic Group

a) Oldest Clans:
Ababanda, Abagessera, Abazigaba, Abungura, Abasinga, Abatchaba or Abiru, etc.

b) Secondary or recent clans:
Abambari, Abalevu, Abalindwa, Abatabo, Abahindi, Abakora, Abahigo, Abahuma, Abatembe, Abaziko, Abashobyo, Abondo, Abanyunjo, Abajongo, Abachira, Abakwa, Abanyoni, Abungura, Abalimba, etc.

3. Batwa Ethnic Group

563 614 They borrow their designations from the Bahutu for most of their clans. Although of Bahutu origin, the Bayovu are linked to the Batwa race. They are regarded as a degenerate group because, like the Negrillos, they eat animals considered impure and make pottery.

In spite of their more or less artificial division into tribes, the Pygmies actually regard themselves from a social point of view as part of one single group called Batwa. They practice what we call solidarity among themselves.

574 If one of them is killed, the whole group feels injured and rises to avenge him. A Mutwa /sing. of Batwa/ who travels is everywhere offered hospitality by his "brothers," even if they do not know him.

421 Property rights exist among the Banyarwanda. They are well defined by custom and tradition, notwithstanding temporary injustices and the discretionary powers of the king and of the chiefs. Everyone recognizes those rights and accepts them in principle. No one fails to exercise them or claim them.

They are taken into account in legal proceedings.

421 Daughters do not inherit but are taken care of by their brothers until the day they marry. /47/

428 Only boys share in the real estate (1).

> 1. As exceptions to this rule, one finds a few joint patrimonial domains which the co-heirs exploit together under the *frerage* (or *frareshe*). This kind of landed property is called *isage* (or *ingaligazi*).

The oldest son, or at least the one appointed by the dying man to succeed him, receives a share slightly larger than that of his brothers, owing to his right of primogeniture. If there are three heirs, the property is divided into three lots of equal size except for one field or one small banana grove.

This /latter/ parcel is called *umusaya* and is added to the share of the first heir.

Cattle and sheep are divided equally among them.

311 423 One does not find any free or abandoned land in Ruanda. There may be more or less extensive areas that lie fallow because they are not very fertile, or because the presence of wild beasts makes them too dangerous, or because they are too remote from inhabited centers or too extensive in relation to the population size, but they are not on this account *res nullius* /Tr.: nobody's property/. Their owners always retain the right to use them and take effective possession of them whenever they wish.

Forests, mountains, moors, marshes, and bogs are divided into a multitude of lots whose owners are publicly known.

[661] Through an abuse of authority, the chiefs may temporarily reserve for themselves part of the plateaus, valleys, or marshy lowlands to graze their cattle.

In spite of this, their subjects retain proprietary ownership of these lands and grasslands and they will not fail to assert their rights at the first opportunity, for example, when a chief departs or when he is replaced.

In some regions it frequently happens that the arable plots no longer meet the /48/ needs of the population. Then those men who

423 are least fortunate or most enterprising get together to sell or exchange
[311] their plots and go to the edge of the forest to buy a piece of land or
to develop the one they owned there.

From then on, the clan to which they belong includes an additional village.

As in Europe the sale and lease of fields and banana groves is made in the presence of witnesses. Land boundaries are marked with stones and other conventional signs.

A felled tree, a displaced stone, some ground which has been broken in a neighbor's field over the dividing line, such things cause frequent litigations that give rise to disunity within families and among tribes over long periods of time.

The Munyarwanda /sing. of Banyarwanda/ remains attached
361 to his native village, to his plot of land. He does not feel the need
to move elsewhere, to change his domicile, as do the Blacks settled
east and west of Tanganyika.

Ruanda soil is richer by far and sustains numerous and varied
[134] crops.

In addition to the banana grove, which is the most important
245 part of his property, the Munyarwanda has begun to plant trees and
to cultivate coffee, which brings in large profits to which he was not
[231] accustomed. Ownership of a small herd of cattle or sheep makes his
home even dearer to him.

It may be said that his home life is more stable than in neigh-
593 boring areas, and that he leaves it only rarely (1).

[166] 1. The Blacks, too, are familiar with nostalgia and home sickness. The fear of a vendetta or the attraction of large salaries may temporarily induce the natives to expatriate themselves. Sooner or later, however, they return to the cradle of their ancestors. The Banyarwanda cite characteristic instances of this.

428 The line of behavior followed by the Banyarwanda when it is
593 time to make a will shows that their social organization, /49/ though far from perfect, is superior to that of many other Negro tribes.

Hamites, Bahutu, and Batwa are anxious to express their last wishes clearly in order to leave nothing unforseen and in order to keep chicanery from creeping in among the heirs.

While alive the father gathers his children around him on a day he selects, or, if he wishes to lend more solemnity to the occasion, he goes with them to the hill chief and offers him a beer as an introductory gift. Among his male children, he appoints the one he likes best as his principal legatee, whether it be the oldest, the youngest, or any one among them.

The chosen son will succeed him in his role as head of the family to levy taxes on his brothers in the name of the king or of the Hamitic chief, and will deal with the latter in matters concerning the small group.

A father may disinherit and curse a son who has given him
[578] serious grounds for complaint, who has not shown him due respect, who has insulted him, abandoned him in times of misfortune, or defected during legal proceedings. "May he bear no more children," he exclaims, spitting into one hand and then into the other. "You have behaved badly toward me. I cut you off from my family. I
[539] curse you." (1)

1. *Ntabyare! Ntaheke! Wambereye gito, nanje ndaguchiye mu bana banje!*

As we have already said, the family property is divided into as many lots as there are boys.

The same holds true for the livestock, cows, goats, and sheep. Each son receives an equal share.

The executor of the will, as the eldest son or head of the family, adds a small field or a piece of a banana grove to his patrimonial share.

While his father is still alive, he usually receives a cow, called "obedience cow" (*inka y'indabukirano*) to confirm his authority

428 over his brothers. As an act of vassalage, the latter must in turn /each/
593 give him a beer, a hoe, and a sheep. /50/ They acknowledge his superiority thereby, and place themselves under his dependence. In return he must show interest in them and in their legal proceedings, take care of their affairs in the event of illness, defend them against one and all.

429 Daughters have no right whatever to inherit from their father. Before he dies, on the other hand, the father appoints one of his sons to look after each one of them to take care of her future, her marriage, and to watch over her until she marries.

851 A daughter whose bride price was paid for in cows receives
431 a heifer from her father or brother when she comes to show them her first born. Among wealthy families, she is given a cow at the birth
556 of each male child. Among poorer families, the gift consists of a young bull, a goat, or one or two hoes, depending on the amount of the bride price (1).

428 Upon their father's death, daughters merely receive garments made of cowhide, hoes, or sheep, which on account of the bereavement are called by the name of "salary or reward for tears."

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1. A cow given under these circumstances is called "young mother's cow" (ichari, umwari). The young bull obtained under the same circumstances is called "woman's garment" (inkanda), because the animal's hide must theoretically be used to clothe the happy mother.

According to the Banyarwanda custom governing the occasion, the child's father must give three jugs of beer and a basketful of cooked food to his father-in-law or to the brother-in-law who is his wife's guardian.

428 The widow whose son was chosen as chief legatee usually enjoys the use of the family property until her death. [768] The sharing is definitively carried out only after she has left this world. A childless widow is usually sent away by her husband's relatives, who share among themselves the property of the deceased. On being dismissed, she is left merely with a mat and a few household utensils. If she is fairly young, one of her brothers-in-law takes her as a concubine or gets her another husband. /51/ 429 When a child loses both parents, he is given a guardian. The legal guardian is the paternal grandfather, or lacking him, an uncle, a paternal first cousin, or lastly the chief of the village himself.

Maternal uncles and aunts, especially if they belong to another clan, cannot as a general rule manage the orphan's property. This would give rise to disputes and legal porceedings among the members of both tribes. They may bring up the child at best.

The guardianship devolves by right to relatives on the paternal side. They administer the ward's property until he comes of age, [582] that is to say, until the day when he takes a wife. This usually happens at the age of eighteen or nineteen.

If only daughters are left, the nearest paternal relatives [428] inherit the family property, but they must take care of the orphans until they marry.

If a person dies childless and leaves no relatives, his property devolves by right to the hill chief. This property is called inkungu.

[166] The families are large, but child mortality is high.

851 551 Eight days after his birth the newborn child receives from his father a name that befits the circumstances (1). The mother /52/ is

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1. "We notice that all men," says Mgr. LeRoy, "give themselves names that characterize them, and frequently the best one they could find was that of an animal whose strength, skill, agility, or beauty they had noticed, of a plant that was useful to them.... of an object or phenomenon which had struck them." (Les primitifs /Primitive Peoples/, p. 126.)

851 We shall now list some examples of
551 those names:

Nture . . . . = "lion"
Se-ntama . . . . = "sheep man"
Se-buhene . . . . . . = "goat man"
Se-nkôkô . . . . = "chicken man"
Se-mbga . . . . = "dog man"
Njangwe . . . . = "cat"
Se-biti . . . . = "tree man"
Bissussa . . . . = "(edible) nettles"
Nyira-massaka . . . = "sorghum girl"
Se-bishimbo . . . . = "bean man"
Se-masuka . . . . . = "hoe man"
Hakiz'umwami . . . = "it is the king who reprieves (or favors)"
Nyiragitondo . . . . = "morning woman" (one born in the morning).
Se-batware . . . . . = "chiefs' man"
Se-mapfa . . . . = "famine man"
Madjoro . . . . = "night" (because born during the night).
Semahundo . . . . . = "sorghum-stalk man"
Lwango . . . . = "the one who hates"
Luvuga-make . . . . = "the one who speaks little" (that is, the quiet one).
Se-bazungu . . . . . = "Europeans' man," that is to say, born upon the arrival of the Whites.
Ndegeya . . . . = "man with a sixth finger," that is to say, born with this peculiarity of a sixth finger.

granted a fair amount of respect, and the child is treated well, but from our point of view his education is nil.

684 As happens among most Negro peoples, the law is very strict for extramarital crimes.

684 It is not extraordinary to hear that a wronged husband has taken justice into his own hands, especially if the culprits were caught *in flagrante delicto*. As for unwed mothers (*ibinyandaro*), in the Bugoyi 684 848 they were abandoned on the islands of Lake Kivu where they died of starvation. The small, rocky, and completely arid islands of Ntera, Kapfunuka, and Itembabagoyi were renowned on this account, along with the larger but deserted islands known by the name of Bugarura, Wawu, etc. In the Nduga and other provinces bordering the Akanyaru, the girls were inexorably hunted out by the chiefs, who had them drowned in the river. They were thrown in with their hands and feet tied, and if they did not sink below the water right away, they were knocked on the head with oars and clubs, under the eyes of the populace who had come to witness their torture. There is a river dweller who is in charge of the execution of those unfortunate victims and who tells cold-bloodedly of the drownings he has carried out. If one is to believe him, a dozen victims have passed through his hands. It is said that a grandfather acted as his own granddaughter's executioner to avoid persecution by the chiefs, who take advantage of /53/ the opportunity to pillage the home of the wrongdoer's relatives. Occasionally, families succeeded in ransoming their child by giving a cow to the local authorities, but obviously such recourse was not available to everyone. Even in this case the newborn child was pitilessly killed at birth. Sometimes the culprit could also be made to escape in time to Urundi, the Ndorwa, or the Congo. The motive alleged for such severity is fear of the punishment that would not fail to befall the country if such crimes were allowed.

Let us add that we are speaking of the past, and that today it 181 would be very difficult to dispose of the criminals without the knowledge of the Europeans. Crimes of this kind, moreover, were relatively rare. The Banyarwanda are indeed superior by far to neighboring peoples as far as morality is concerned. It is of little moment that this should be attributed to the altitude of the country, which reaches an average of 1, 700 or 1, 800 meters, or to their working habits, both of which facts are incidentally quite true.

[152 In any event the women are very shy. So are the nubile girls, 862] who are closely watched by their mothers.

342 The Munyarwanda /sing. of Banyarwanda/ lives in round huts made of reeds, bamboo, and small sticks which are stuck into the ground and whose tips vanish into a sort of previously braided roof (igisenge).

Flexible stalks, gathered into bunches and tied inside in the shape of a circle, lend unity and strength to the structure. Wooden pillars placed under the dome serve as supports and keep the arch from falling over its owners.

The cover is made of grass: sometimes hay from the grasslands, sometimes coarse marsh grass called urukangaga.

[554] Let us add that the beauty and solidity of the hut vary with the wealth of its owner. The hut /54/ includes several compartments divided by partitions of woven bamboo or reeds.

352 513 The bed is made of four pickets set into the ground and interconnected by pieces of wood across the width and length. It supports a mattress of grass covered with a mat. The bed is reserved for the parents. Children sleep on the ground on a mat used half as a mattress and half as a cover.

231 If the owner has some sheep or goats, or even a small calf, he makes room for them in one corner of the hut. The poultry also settles there. And everyone sleeps most peacefully.

354 [415] The furnishings are very primitive. Three clumps of earth, once the domes of as many anthills, make up the andirons of the hearth. They support a large water jar that serves to cook everything. Above the hearth sits a sort of grid where wood is laid to dry.

352 415 In addition, against the partition delimiting the space reserved for strangers, there are jars and jugs of varying size, a half-gourd to scoop water, whole gourds of varying shape and size to hold banana juice or drinking water.

351 [343] If the Munyarwanda is fortunate enough to own a cow, which is a gift from the gods, he will also have milk containers and churns. Slightly hollowed round billets are used as seats. The hut is usually surrounded by a courtyard of variable size enclosed by a wall of ficus or euphorbia (imiyenzi) that serves as shelter against the wind and protection against thieves. Small shelters (indaro) dedicated to the spirits and food granaries stand within the courtyard to one side or another.

316 The industries of Ruanda are very primitive. The country is poor in iron ore, which is hardly to be found except in the Buberuka and Kanage. The Banyarwanda extract it mostly from the Bunyabungu, southwest of Lake Kivu.

[324] They make hoes, spears, billhooks, and rudimentary knives out of it. /55/

285 323 Basketry is more highly developed, but except for a few small articles made rather artfully by Batutsi women in their leisure time, this industry is not especially remarkable. Workmen and artisans seek to make only what is practical. The making of pottery, as we said before, is almost exclusively the prerogative of the Batwa or the Bayovu, a Muhutu /Bahutu/ clan despised almost as much as the Batwa ethnic group.

462 Women have set tasks as well as men. While they take care of the children, prepare meals, keep the hut orderly and clean, the husband milks the cows and repairs the huts. Furthermore, they are often seen working together in the fields or gathering cereals (1).

1. *Grammaire Kirundi* /Kirundi Grammar/ by Rev. Ft. Ménard of the White Fathers. Maison-Carrée (Algiers).

What the author says of the Barundi in his preface applies almost *in toto* to the Banyarwanda. The two lands and the two nations are very much alike. Except for a few small differences, the language is the same.

771 776 From a religious point of view, the Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ is extremely superstitious. He acknowledges the existence of a supreme being (Imana), creator of all things, but is not much preoccupied with him in his everyday life because that being does no harm.

769 775 He cares for the ancestral spirits, whom he fears. He believes, indeed, that the spirits of the dead are the authors of the evils that befall him.

769 This explains his invocations, offerings, and libations before the hood-shaped shelter that contains the angered spirit who was pointed out to him.

784 The Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ is bound by the law of taboos (*imiziro*).

He may not smoke or sit on a chair during a thunderstorm. A woman may not use a billhook to cut grass. She may eat only cow meat. The flesh of certain animals is forbidden, /56/ in some cases to every Munyarwanda, in others to certain clans only. The objects used by a deceased person and the food that was in the hut at the time of his death are taboo. At the end of the mourning period, all these things will be purified with lustral water. The widow herself will have to go through the rites of purification.

Work is forbidden on certain days. The relatives of a deceased person give up all their occupations for four or five days.

Upon the death of the king, all work in the fields is prohibited for three months. In certain parts of Ruanda, one stops work for one day when a child is born, when a hut has burned down, when there has been a hailstorm, even when a dog has died. Some taboos only affect the king.

763 The burial method peculiar to the Banyarwanda, which incidentally is shared by other African peoples, must now be mentioned. When a sick person is about to die and spreads his arms and legs, his relatives bring his knees up to the chin. His arms are bent at the elbows and his hands are made to cover his face.

764 This crouching position is the absolute rule among pagans. It is not far-fetched to state that this most uncomfortable position, when forced on a dying person, makes breathing very difficult and shortens his last moments.

[824] In the right hand of the deceased, one places the leaves of plants with magical properties, *ishoza*, *umulembe*, *umwishwa*, seeds of squash, sorghum, and *issogi*, and lamb's wool. All these things are symbols explained by the following words pronounced on this occasion, "Return to us as a limb (with the sweetness of a lamb)! Return to us without thorns (like the plants, soft to the touch, that we have given thee), that is to say, without mean intentions."

764 His relatives leave him victuals and a few utensils for the long trip to the netherland. They attend to his needs but ask him in return not to come and torment them. /57/ This is an ethnic custom which the Blacks observe with great faithfulness, so much so that if death occurs unbeknownst to them, they will do everything possible to bring the body to this crouching position. They will even use a cutting instrument to force the limbs into the desired posture. "To give the dead the shape of a basket (Gupfuny' upfuye nk' igitebo)" is the Runyaruanda expression used to describe this procedure. In so doing the Blacks believe that they are performing an act of filial reverence. It would be a lack of respect toward the dead not to fold their legs. "You bury your dead as straight and stiff as sticks," the pagans used to exclaim at first when they reproached Christians for no longer following the native customs.

The body is wrapped in a mat and tied in order to maintain the prescribed shape. The twine is cut only at the burial ground. The body is buried so that the face lies on its right side (1).

764

1. The funeral rites practiced at the death of a Hamitic prince are totally different from those of the Bahutu. The royal corpse is mummified and dried under the action of fire. The undertakers who are in charge of this follow a complex and strange etiquette. Cf. Book IV, Chapter VII.

170 The dead of the Mousterian and Aurignacian eras were found buried in the sleeping position, with their face resting on the right side, while during the Magdalenian era the face of the dead rests on the left side. The Egyptians and Nasamon of Tripolitania proceeded approximately in the same manner.

"The body (of an Egyptian)," says Dr. Weisgerber, "usually lay on the left side (head to the south), with legs folded, knees brought up near the chest, hands on the face or neck. . . .

800 "Herodotus, " the same author goes on to say, "tells us that the Nasamon who lived in Tripolitania buried their dead in a crouching position. They took good care /58/ that a dying person, when about to give up the ghost, should be made to sit up and prevented from lying down. . . . " (1)

1. Dr. Weisgerber, Les Blancs d'Afrique /The Whites of Africa/, pp. 309 and 310.

121 Déchelette says that it is not possible to explain the origin of this custom of folding up the corpse. Several conjectures have been offered about it.

1. Identification of the corpse with a fetus (symbolic embryonic position). The deceased returns to the womb of the mother, who will bring him back to life (belief of the Peruvians and Hottentots).

2. Practice performed for practical reasons, so as to reduce the dimensions of the funeral container (or grave).

3. Feeling of terror which the dead inspired in the living (possible origin of the tying process) (2).

2. Joseph Déchelette, Manuel d'Archéologie prehistorique, celtique et gallo-romaine /Handbook of Prehistoric, Celtic, and Gallo-Roman Archeology/, Vol. 1, p. 473.

764 In some parts of Ruanda the relatives of the deceased, after preparing the grave, dig to one side and at the bottom of the pit a sort of chamber where the body is laid. They are obviously moved by respect for the dead whose body, thus placed, is not crushed by the weight of the earth.

Others cover the mortal remains with a layer of grass to prevent direct contact with the soil and to allay the weight [of the earth].

This explains an expression used by the ancients, who would say to one another as a wish, "May the earth rest lightly on thy bones."

The description we have just given of burial methods observed in countries very remote from one another shows a general family resemblance which is surprising to encounter in such different periods, since even today we find these same practices among the Blacks.

One is also surprised to find that the primitive mill /59/ of the polished stone age, or Neolithic period, is almost identical to that used now by the Blacks of Africa. It consists of a block of granite into which a hole has been made, with a roughly cylindrical stone serving as pestle. Deniker regards it as "the most primitive version of the mortar and pestle."

"We are also familiar," says Déchelette, "with the primitive neolithic millstones, a number of which are in existence. They are found in abundance at both land and lake sites. They are mere flat stones of compact rock, frequently sandstone, of which one facet, worn by friction, is more or less concave. Grain was crushed on these millstones by means of a crushing stone that was made to rotate. These primitive mills are still to be found among various tribes of modern ethnography. In the great neolithic necropolis in the vicinity of Worms, some women's graves each contain one of those hand mills." (1)

1. Joseph Déchelette, op. cit., pp. 344 and 345.

"Excavations," Dr. G. Contenau adds in turn, "have revealed one type of archaic mill. This is a bowl of porous stone shaped like a platter, on which grain was crushed with a round pebble made of the smea kind of stone." (2)

2. Dr. G. Contenau, La Civilisation phénicienne /The Phoenician Civilization/, p. 284.

Déchelette, speaking of the use of these hand mills, says that "with the wheat made into flour on those primitive millstones, the

600 neolithic people made a bread or rather a cake, some interesting specimens of which have been preserved in the waters of Swiss lakes.... "They are round biscuits, probably prepared without yeast with coarse flour...." (3) The bread made of sorghum flour that the

3. Joseph Déchelette, op. cit., p. 344.

Blacks bake is similar to those biscuits and of the same shape. /60/

Who can fail to see that all these analogies, resemblances, and ethnological similarities open to the mind a vast realm of conjecture, especially if one accepts the idea that Africa is the cradle of the Aurignacian civilization (1)?

1. It is enough to wander through the galleries of a museum of comparative ethnography, Déchelette adds, to find that the initial stage of civilization among all peoples of the earth presents in every case, if not a uniform appearance, at least many identical fundamental traits. Everywhere the same industry corresponds to the same cultural phase. (Op. cit. p. 313.

614
825 Totemism is not highly prized in Ruanda. Perhaps it is nothing more than a vestige from the past. The totem is always an animal. That of the king is a leopard, the crowned crane is that of the Banyiginya, and the frog that of the Bega. Among the Bahutu, the Bagessera have the wagtail (inyamanza) as their totem, the Babanda have the hyena (impyisi), the Basinga the sparrow hawk (sakabaka), etc. The totem is a member of the clan and is respected as such by the other members.

In the past it happened sometimes that the clan took up arms to avenge the death of its totem, deliberately or accidentally killed by one of the members of a neighboring tribe. The members of certain tribes, the Bapyisi, for example, are said to communicate

614 825 with their totems or even with other animals, to render them harmless or to excite them against their enemies.

This, however, is a belief that will soon disappear, for the Banyarwanda take small notice of their totems nowadays.

538 As far as oral literature and folklore in general are concerned, one may assert without risk of error that the Banyarwanda have no reason to envy the neighboring peoples.

There may be few Black groups who managed to preserve so many and such ancient traditions, made all the more precious by the fact that they help us understand more than one facet of their history. This will be shown readily /61/ in the course of this work. We believe that the Hamites, who are given to the things of the mind and have organized the country methodically, must be justly regarded as the chief authors of this literary development.

181 The Bahutu of Ruanda owe to these same Batutsi the appreciable advantage of being less backward, less "primitive" than many of their fellow Bantu of Central Africa. Because they were less isolated than most of the members of the tiny neighboring states at the time of European penetration, the Banyawanda found themselves in a situation more favorable to the progress of civilization thanks to the centralization of the Hamitic state.

171 The inhabitants of Ruanda, as we have just pointed out, have more than one trait in common with the other African tribes. In speaking on the subject, Maurice Delafosse provides the following explanation, "The African Negro peoples, as different from one another as they may seem to a superficial observer, have a unified character which may be attributed to their common ethnic origins and to the relative similarity of the physical, economic, and social environments where they first developed and where they later evolved." (1)

1. Les Civilisations négro-africaines /Negro African Civilizations/.

157 As for the reader who wishes to know what to think of the Blacks, we must answer in all sincerity that it is very difficult to

157 make precise and definite judgments about their temperament and mentality. The factors involved are so complex that it is easy to be misled and influenced by racial prejudices or by lack of knowledge of this strange people.

Much has been written on the subject. We shall present as ours the following opinions, which we have summarized (2). /62/

> 2. They were given by a civil servant of the Educational Service of Uganda and published in an American journal. (Communication of Rev. Fr. Joire of the White Fathers.)

An observer will note that the Black has many characteristics quite different from those of the white race. These characteristics may be divided into two groups: those that would help him climb the ladder of civilization and progress, and those that would be a handicap, a hereditary taint of which he must beware, for they might become a serious impediment to the progress of his race.

I. Let us first consider the assets.

Patience. Among the Whites, who are usually so quick, who cannot bear delays, and who are the foes of laziness, anger and impatience are always lurking just below the surface. When we come into contact with the Blacks, on the other hand, we are surprised by their patience and their endurance in suffering.

Joviality. There is no doubt that the Blacks have a basic joviality which, however, varies considerably in degree among the several tribes....

Arts and crafts. Ornamental designs (sculpture on wood, ivory, gourds, etc.; designs on pottery and bark cloth, basketry, beadwork, mats, etc.) show quite remarkable taste and skill but reveal hardly any progress, innovation, or improvement, or none whatever. The Blacks seem marvelously gifted for imitation but lacking in inventive genius (1).

> 1. We believe that the true reason for this is the isolation in which they have lived.

157 Eloquence. It was no doubt necessary to cultivate loquacity in lands totally ignorant of the art of writing. Whatever the reason, there is no doubt that the Blacks find it easier to speak endlessly than to remain silent.... It does not occur to the Blacks to limit their speeches to pertinent data. /63/

Loyalty. Among the various peoples of East-Central Africa with whom I have been in contact, I have always found a remarkable degree of loyalfy in return for the confidence placed in them.

Instincts. In my opinion, they have those of the most primitive peoples. Among those instincts, some may be classed among the characteristics beneficial to the Blacks.

1. First, the religious instinct. I do not believe that a "skeptic" ever existed among the true Black primitives. He is a by-product of civilization.

2. Perspicacity. The Blacks seem gifted with a mysterious power to judge strangers.... This gift of insight, which enables them to perceive the characteristics of a foreigner, is enviable. I do not mean to say that every black man possesses it individually to a remarkable degree, but collectively they seem able to judge a foreigner in practically no time. This is applied to the Whites, who no sooner arrived are granted a surname by the natives. If this name is not flattering, it will be used without his knowledge.

II And now, a few words on the shortcomings of the Negroes of Central Africa.

Duplicity. Lying is a "cultivated" art among our Africans.... It is quite likely that this is a familial practice, or else how could one explain their great skill in this art? It must be in part the result of circumstances, for primitive people regard it as a natural means of protection.... As a result, the Blacks have little if any sense of honor and place ruse on a much higher level than truth.

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461 Laziness. There have been few occasions for the Blacks to develop habits of industriousness and sustained effort. /64/ As a rule, nature was very kind to them, supplying them with essentials even where the population was densest. Their needs were few apart from their own subsistence and that of their livestock. The rains were seasonal, and sowing time depended upon them. In the villages those

157 461 were the times of hard work for all able-bodied persons who could wield a hoe. Once sowing time was over, why cultivate further? The busy times were intermittent, therefore, and even those people who were most inclined to work had nothing to do but sit for a good half of the year, unless a war should bring them to their feet. It is obvious that such a state of affairs does not lead to the development of industrious habits and sustained application to work.

157 Immorality. I fear that I won't be contradicted if I say that the Black is immoral.... How could one expect these "child-peoples," who live such a carefree and easy life, to acquire habits of abnegation and self-restraint? When the evangelization of these primitive tribes was begun, it was not easy to establish among them such habits of morality as befit a Christian people (1).

> 1. We have good reason to believe that the Banyarwanda may be classified among the least corrupt. The taboos and traditions that prevail among them act as a check against profligacy.

[609] Mistrust. Centuries of struggle to the death among the various African tribes have engendered... a certain attitude toward foreigners which makes it very difficult for a well-intentioned person to lead them as far as he might wish on the road to progress....

To conclude. If the previous lines do not contain an exact description of the African in general (for there are no generalizations applicable at once to one and all), /65/ I hope nevertheless not to have been guilty of injustice toward the Blacks in describing them. If only they could make the most of their assets and persevere in conquering their shortcomings, then no doubt a fine future would be open to them.

The same author adds that if one could persuade them to develop a civilization peculiar to their race, instead of slavishly giving way to their natural aptitude for copying that of others, this would be a good contribution to the glory of humanity and a denial

157 of the common assertion that the Blacks are of such limited intellectual capacity that it is impossible for them to attain the habitual level of civilized men (1).

> 1. If one were to draw a mental portrait of the Batutsi, one should praise their intelligence, their sense of discipline, their organizational talent, and their stubborn will. Since every coin has two sides, however, one should add that the great Batutsi chiefs are far more immoral than the Bakutu.

.... Experience of the African mentality, the author goes on to say, has shown that a number of things that one might be tempted to discuss with assurance must be stated with reservations. The fact is that the Blacks are a mass of contradictions to the Whites.... This is said... to suggest that the hastiness of such conclusions must stand in reverse ratio to the experience that inspired them.

This could hardly have been said with greater tact and restraint.

OVO General Mangin, an experienced colonial well acquainted with African matters, makes the following remarks on the same subject, "When we judge the Black race, we must not lose sight of these basic facts: until the middle of the nineteenth century, the African, kept isolated by nature, came in contact with no higher concepts.

"Europe, on the other hand, witnessed the development of the Mediterranean civilizations, which benefited from broad exchanges among themselves and with Asiatic civilization. Writing came from Egypt through Phoenicia and Greece, /66/ Asia invented a number of alphabets while Europe invented none. Through the Arabs and Mongols, Europe unknowingly benefited from important contributions of Indian and Chinese origin: compass, paper paste, and gunpowder, for example. In short, the European peoples have evolved slowly over the past 3, 000 years or so, in contact with all civilizations through trade and war. Nothing similar happened in Negro Africa. In the nineteenth century it resembles Central Europe prior to the Roman conquest.

As a result nothing permits us to assert that the race of black Africans is inferior to the European Whites in terms of intelligence. At most one might say that they are several stages behind. Our present status is the result of a slow evolution which they lack, and we cannot judge them by their behavior when suddenly propelled into the midst of modern civilization, for example by the results obtained in Liberia, Santo Domingo, or Haiti. Within their own setting, they have produced great organizer-kings who found ministers worthy of their undertakings...; some of their languages, like that of the Peul, are greatly admired by philologists for their richness, precision, harmony, and flexibility. The Blacks are remarkably gifted from an artistic standpoint.... (Their musical instruments), from which they draw effects comparable to those of a piano, show a remarkable aptitude /for music/ and a great capacity for invention. Their war songs and some of their ballads are very expressive."

The General speaks of the daring, naive, and apt expressions found in their literature and in their triumphal songs.

He adds that the Blacks have a sense of ornamentation. Their fabrics and mats are remarkable for their design and color balance.

.... Their feelings for family, clan, and race, their devotion to their born or elected chief, have always inspired in them a devotion that ranges from constant fidelity /67/, from a total and daily selflessness, to the sacrifice of their life.

Of course, one sometimes blames them for a carelessness toward work that may turn into laziness if the chief lacks the requisite attitude, a quiet but firm manner which the Blacks acknowledge quite readily....

As a rule the Blacks are open, gay, and easy to command. They are big children whose laughter explodes at every opportunity, disarming their anger and sulkiness. They are grateful for the smallest attentions.

The same author adds that there are excellent Blacks "who, much to their credit, weathered two ordeals: a hereditary one, slavery

ODD (which is basically demoralizing) and the sudden, unplanned rise to the level of their former masters, owing to prematurely granted rights of citizenship.... Many were unable to withstand this two-fold distortion. The primitive Blacks, however, have none of the defects transmitted to the spuriously civilized Blacks through our own errors." (1)

1. General Mangin, Regards sur la France d'Afrique /A Look Toward French Africa/, pp. 174-178.

Rev. Fr. Pinard de la Boullaye, in speaking of "very primitive" societies, lists the causes which explain their stagnation, ... "concentration of their energies on tasks which are not, like industry, susceptible of improvement: once the game is killed or the fish caught, their efforts come to a stop only to begin again endlessly and with no ulterior goal. Hence, general equality ... no specialists to perfect the procedures, no "idlers" dedicated to speculation" ... (2).

2. Rev. Fr. Pinard de la Boullaye, S.J. Correspondant, January 25, 1929.

[463 176] The same might be said of the Banyarwanda, who are cultivators, woodcutters, blacksmiths, basket makers, potters, etc., and who have merely imitated their predecessors and made no innovations. To sum up this matter of stagnation, let us add that it would be wrong and unjust to attribute it to a lack of intelligence /68/ on the part of the Blacks. Among many other causes, it comes chiefly from their lack of method and their lack of initiative, which are due to the long isolation in which they have lived. As we have said before, the facilities and resources offered by nature to the Africans are also partly responsible for this. The intermittent work required for their daily sustenance demanded no great efforts. The Blacks, with their trust in nature, their satisfaction with their fate, their lack of artificial needs and cares, and no worries about the morrow, would "let themselves live" from day to day. Let us hear what Mr. Delafosse, the

600 scholarly ethnologist, has to say. "It is said that the Blacks are actually inferior in their intellectual development to the other human groups. It seems to me that in saying this, one has confused 'ignorance' with 'lack of intelligence.' The greatest genius in the world, if he had never gone to school and had always lived among savages, would no doubt have been completely unable to display his high natural intelligence, although this does not mean that he would have lacked it.

"It has further been said, however, that some African Blacks have been educated and exposed to a highly developed intellectual atmosphere and yet have produced nothing.

".... In order to judge accurately the intellectual capacities of a people taken as a whole, one must watch the natural evolution of the group rather than pick out a few individuals, more or less aptly chosen, and transpose them to a world so remote from their own that they can only appear as uprooted and like any uprooted plant wilt and die, except in very exceptional circumstances. As it is, the Blacks of Africa had the fatal bad luck of not being permitted to evolve like the other major human races. This, incidentally, was in no way their fault (since they were isolated from the rest of humanity).

".... The African Negroes demonstrate the situation, no doubt unique in this world, of a whole race that could never turn /69/ to anyone but itself in order to evolve and that received nothing from the outside, or received as many regressive factors as progressive elements, if not indeed more. Would we have done better than they, had we been in the same situation?

".... The isolation in which natural barriers kept them for so long has made the Negroes of Africa appear backward as compared with the more fortunate Europeans, or more precisely has delayed them. They have lost much time, and they could not catch up in one day or even in one century. They certainly have not said their last word, however, and their history is not at an end. Perhaps it is only beginning, and this book is only a preface." (1)

1. Les Noirs de l'Afrique
/The Black Peoples of Africa/,
pp. 155 ff.

000 To conclude this chapter, we shall bring to the readers' attention the following lines, which are pertinent to our topic and which defend the Black race. They were written by a prehistorian.

"It is a phenomenon worthy of note that this intelligence (which effected man's total evolution), whenever it can be apprehended, proves to be the same throughout the ages. Potentially, man was as intelligent in the most ancient times as he proudly is today.

"In all eras, human intelligence has seemed susceptible of reaching its highest development, ranging all the way to genius, under the influence of the environment. The painters of paleolithic caves, for example, equaled in realism the best animal artists of our time.

"We seem to witness an evolution of matter, but never one of the spirit."

In another passage of his work, this prehistorian adds, ". . . . It may seem strange that thousands of years ago, man should already have known and put to use such abstract principles (he is referring to magic) as those we shall see him apply, and yet, at the same time /70/, his artistic genius was attuned to his concepts: an astonishing proof that throughout the endless centuries, man's intelligence has always proved the same, ever capable, under the necessities of the moment, to reach the development needed to face up to those necessities (1)..

The same author, speaking of the Aurignacian civilization, offers striking hypotheses about the Africans.

"This origin (of the Aurignacian civilization in France), was it Asiatic? Or rather, would not the tremendous leap this civilization seems to have made in Africa appear to indicate that its original nucleus was to be found there also? A civilization that originated on African soil, there is something to upset the principles which have been taught up to now!

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1. Georges Goury, Origine et évolution de l'homme /Man's Origins and Evolution/, pp. 31 and 321.

000 "The classical tradition has never ceased to assert that all ancient civilizations came from the Orient, as did the great streams of peoples who gave rise to the first historic invasions.

"We are so permeated with traditions set up as dogmas that to think of Africa as a civilizing nucleus seems to us incomprehensible. And yet, is not the history of Egypt a proof that a civilization equal in greatness and importance to those we believe came from the Orient may arise on this African soil? Studies of the prehistory and protohistory of Egypt prove that the peculiar civilization of this country was not a sort of lost branch of the civilizing Asiatic trunk, but the highest flowering of an autochthonous civilization.

"Nowadays, in any case, one no longer thinks of the African peoples as degenerate elements of the human family, but as branches which have remained at a primitive stage of evolution.

"Why, then, is it unthinkable that Africa should have produced the /71/ civilizing nucleus of the Aurignacian culture and then played an important role in the peopling of southern Europe?

"African prehistory, like Asian prehistory, is still too little known for us to offer anything but hypotheses. It seems that we are at least in a position to assert, however, that the first stream of people to whom we owe the Lower Aurignacian /culture/ came from Africa by way of Spain and no doubt also of Italy." (1)

1. Op. cit., pp. 194-195.

172 One finds traces of paleolithic industries in Ruanda and in neighboring areas.

In the course of a geological expedition in 1921-22, Rev. Fr. Salée found a quartz amygdaloid axe of Acheulian type.

The find was made in "an area (the Nduga) of very worn ridges revealing vast outcrops of biotitic granite ... among the thin deposits of a small marshy stream, a tributary of the Karuruma." The absence of fossils did not permit the explorer to date this industry in geological chronology.

In 1926, Rev. Fr. Tristan found on a platform of Mount Mugera (Urundi) "a whole group of lithic pieces, obviously worked and of

172 paleolithic type, along with fragments of cuttings, roughly attempted pieces, and traces of a hearth." Those tools had been carved in a quartzite which had been made quite friable by weathering. They were buried under a layer of red clayey soil, about 1 to 1 1/2 meters thick on the average but sometimes as deep as 3 meters, and they lay at the top of a formation of lateritic gravel crossed by veins of limonite which increased with depth.

"The demarcation between the clayey layer /72/ and the gravel is very clear.... The surface... is indeed an ancient ground upon which stood the paleolithic-style workshop. The materials were supplied by the quartzites of Mount Mugera. The steep slopes of the latter still jut upwards as high as 150 meters above the platform of the Petit Seminaire /Little Seminary/, which rises above the junction of the Ruvuvu and Luvironza rivers surrounding Mugera." (1)

1. Communications from Mr. Salée, Annales de la Société scientifique de Bruxelles /Annals of the Brussels Scientific Society/, April 21 and 22, 1925, and April 25, 1927.

000 To mention Ham and the curse which is said to have struck and corrupted the black race to its utmost depths, even in a mere figurative sense, is to commit one of those platitudes which must be classed with absurd and preconceived ideas.

It is more appropriate to admire the skill which the Africans have shown in their long and thorough isolation, drawing out nature's resources with the small means at their disposal "in order to cope with that eternal obsession, the struggle for existence."

Chapter 3

Short Historical Account of the Hamitic Invasion of Ruanda

173 Our intention here is to furnish a summary that will enable the reader to encompass with a quick look the history of Ruanda and the gradual conquest of the territory by the Hamites.

This small summary, we believe, will facilitate the understanding of the narratives, romances, and legends which we have intentionally linked with the career of each monarch.

We beg the indulgence of the reader in regard to the evaluations and opinions of the author concerning the narratives and incidents /73/ which are discussed below. He had as a guide only the traditional documentation available, that is to say, that of strictly oral transmission.

These traditions may be vague, incomplete, legendary, and even sometimes contradictory, depending on whether they were narrated by one or another individual, in one region or another. One must be glad, nevertheless, that they have come down to us, curtailed and distorted as they may be. No doubt there must be very few primitive peoples (1) with a folklore as rich and varied as that of the

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1. What is a Primitive? Fr. Bros gives the following definition. The word "primitive" must be explained. It does not designate here the first man or men, but a certain stage of human civilization characterized by crude and unspecialized industries and social customs. In the same sense, one says "populations of inferior culture," "savage or uncivilized peoples."

000 What is a primitive? By what signs is he recognized? Historians traditionally regard as primitive prehistoric peoples, the savage populations of the various continents, and also the ancient civilizations antedating the history of the various peoples (Greeks, Romans, Arabs, etc.)

Ethnologists have recently attempted to introduce certain distinctions into this confusion. They have evaluated the degree of primitiveness of various primitive peoples... by tracing every known cycle of civilization geographically through space and historically through time. (Cf. Ecclesia, Encyclopédie populaire des connaissances religieuses /Ecclesia, Popular Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge/, pp. 725 and 726.)

173 Banyarwanda. The arrival of the Hamites, or Batutsi, in the area and the influence they exercised there, especially when they entered the central province of Nduga under Mibambge-Mutabazi, twenty-third in the dynasty, transformed Ruanda and its autochthonous inhabitants in more ways than one. The conquerors contributed a great deal to the development of the legends and traditions.

173 814 A great part of what we have to say about Ruanda was related to us by the official historians, abachurabgenge ("knowledge makers"), appointed to the court. From times immemorial, those men have been in charge of preserving the memory of the Hamitic princes' deeds and actions. /74/

173 8/4 They record the genealogy of kings, their birth name and reigning name. They do not overlook the queen-mother's name and that of her clan of origin. They are always at the monarch's beck and call, attend upon him in shifts two by two, and beguile his leisure with the narration of his ancestral lineage and of the exploits that adorn it. It must be admitted that this purely oral tradition is liable to a serious shortcoming, forgetfulness and resulting distortion. Time, that wears away everything, eventually obliterates certain facts and even the names of people whose existence is lost in the mists of time and who are replaced with legends and myths. This is the impression made by the tales of the chroniclers concerning the first sovereigns of the Mututsi /Batutsi/ dynasty. The first nine or ten kings seem to have been invented out of whole cloth. Their genealogy seems to have been created as an afterthought in order to flatter the pride of princes, who are enraptured at the thought of being descended from a long line of ancestors with some demigods among them.

173 These legends, nevertheless, do not lack interest. They disclose native ideas about the creation of the world, the existence of good and evil, the origin of death, etc.

Moreover, the historical outline is revealed in spite of everything and makes it possible for us to divine the political state of affairs in Ruanda at the time of the Batutsi arrival.

Whence did the Hamites come? No one knows exactly. It is likely that they came from the Nkole, which is now part of the Protectorate of Uganda. It is generally agreed that they emerged from the Ndorwa through the northeast and that they stayed for a while at the place called Mutara, which is often mentioned in narratives and legends.

While some of them settled more or less definitively in the Ndorwa region and its immediate surroundings, others continued their journey and successively established the kingdoms of Ruanda, Gissaka, /75/ Burundi, and Uha (1). The first stopping places and first conquests

1. The eight small kingdoms located in the territory of the Bahaya (shore dwellers of lake

> /sic/ Nyanza) are governed by Bahinda princes of Muhima, that is to say, Mututsi origin, who conquered the area. Those tiny principalities are called by the names of Karagwe, Kitara, Kiziba, Bugabo, Kyamtwara, Kiyanja, Ihangiro, and Usui. Their total surface adds up to 30, 000 or 35, 000 square kilometers, while Lake Nyanza covers 68, 600 square kilometers. (Cf. Anthropos, 1927, "Comment les Bahaya interprètent leurs origines /How the Bahaya Interpret their Origins/, " by Rev. Fr. César.)
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> In the Unyamwezi, especially near Tabora, one still finds Hamitic groups who have retained their customs and language and who live on good terms with the autochthonous inhabitants of the region. The royal family of the Ufipa is partially of Mututsi racial stock . (Cf. Aux Rives du Tanganika /On the Shores of the Tanganyika/, by Mgr. Lechaptois, Maison-Carrée, Algiers.)

of the Hamites who founded the kingdom of Ruanda were the Buganza, Bwana-Chambge, and Buliza, the plateaus of Bussigi and Luhanga, the Bumbogo, etc. The Buganza was part of Gissaka kingdom for a while, and the Bwana-Chambge, in turn, was divided between the two Hamitic states. The Batutsi, united at first, soon began to make war on each other and to dispute the land. There were fratricidal wars in which the conquered autochthonous inhabitants took part.

Prior to the Hamitic penetration, the Bahutu, or aborigines of Bantu racial stock, were divided into a number of principalities, the stronger of which attempted to absorb the weaker.

173 The varied origins of the tribes which occupied this area explain the multitude of autonomous groups found by the newcomers. The northern populations came almost in their entirety from the Mpororo and Ndorwa.

To the west, the Bagoyi on the east shore of Lake Kivu came from the Bgisha, Gishari, Mushari, Kamuronsi, and Bunyabungu, all of which are areas situated north and west of the lake. To the southwest, the Kinyaga inhabitants are a mixture of Banyabungu and Barundi /Rundi/. To the south and to the east, the population seems closely related to that of Urundi and Karagwe.

The most powerful tribe seems to have been the one that inhabited the Nduga. In the times of Kigeri I and /76/ Mibambge I Mutabazi, the tribe was ruled by the famous diviner-sorceror Mashira, who held the combined functions of king and priest. The reputation of this chief was due less to his military exploits than to the supernatural powers with which legend endows him. On the present soil of Ruanda there stood, among many others, the tiny kingdoms of Marangara, Bwana-Mkali (the Barenge), Burwe, Bgishaza, Budaha, Kingogo, Bugamba, Bushiru (1), Buhoma, Luhengeri, Bukonya, etc.

1. A province with a symbolic and meaningful name. The memories it calls to mind could not be expressed better.

[103] Bushiru is a noun derived from the neutral verb gushira, which means "to end," "to die out." It was lent this area whose inhabitants were incorrigible quarrelers and fighters who scorned death, who were always at war, who exterminated one another, and who killed those travelers who were sufficiently foolhardy to venture into the region.

173 The families or clans which made up each of those tiny states were at first autonomous and independent from one another. They were self-governed and lacked any well-defined authority. It was only gradually in the course of time that one local chief came to impose his will upon the others. Along with royal prerogatives, and in accordance with his title of sovereign, the man in power took over the functions of sorcerer, diviner, magician, rain maker, etc. The office of sorcerer-king (umuhinza) then became hereditary. The small provinces of Buberuka, Kibali, Buyoka, Bugarura, and especially Mulera, retained their original organization and never had kings. Each tribe governed and administered itself according to its own lights. As a result they were nearly always at war with one another owing to thefts, boundary disputes, or vendettas (2). Peace ruled for a while among those tribes only when they banded forces against the common enemy, the detested Hamite, who, in spite of the fact that he had subdued them, had not deemed it safe to settle in the mountainous regions. Ruganzu II and Kigeri IV Lwabugiri are listed among the Hamitic kings who traveled through those areas populated by proud /77/ inhabitants. The mountain dwellers did not make a great show of resistance, but after the princes were gone, they nevertheless continued to lead an independent existence. No Mututsi chief dared settle among those fierce populations. Their only obligation was to pay tribute in kind to the king himself or to the high court dignitary who was supposed to govern the area at a distance.

The Bantu of the central and southern provinces, who make up the greater part of the Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ population, [184] accepted and bore more readily the yoke of the Hamites, who settled among them and shared their way of life (1).

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[628] 2. This region was preeminently the land of the vendetta. Individuals would take justice into their own hands, with the help of family or clan members, and were implacable in /seeking/ vengeance.

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1. The clans in those provinces are more imbued with Mututsi influence and lack the jealous exclusivism of the tribes situated to the northeast of Lake Kivu. Their mores are gentler, and vendetta never ruled among them with the violence and frequency it assumes, for example, among the Balera and Bagoyi.

173 The vicissitudes of the conquest were numerous and varied. The immigrants used every possible means /to attain their goal/, violence, ruse, and diplomacy. Their chronicles /chansons de geste/ bear witness to this.

It seems that before they entered the land which they were to conquer, the Batutsi formed a solid group ruled by a single chief. The partition of the land and competition for power soon divided their allegiance and engendered fratricidal struggles.

After they had subdued the Bahutu (Bantu) princes, the central Batutsi, who dreamed of being the sole rulers of a vast land, turned against their own brothers who had hewed out small kingdoms in the Ndorwa, Gissaka, and Bugessera regions.

Were the two last-mentioned Hamitic kingdoms contemporary to that of Ruanda? Nothing rules against this possibility, since the columns that invaded Ruanda marched side by side /de front/, at least in the beginning.

King Gihanga, whose symbolic and significant name /78/ means "Creator," seems to have existed although the deeds which are attributed to him have a strongly legendary character. He is tenth in the dynasty. The authenticity of his reign tends to be corroborated by the fact that his original place of residence is said to have been the sacred land of Buhanga in the Muko Plain not far from the large Mukungwa River. Then he is said to have lived in the land of Kibali, at Kangomba, where a sacred grove (ikigabiro) stands. The same tradition locates his tomb, or at least that of his wife Nyirakabego, 173 in the royal cemetery which retained his name and which is called Luhanga. Must he be regarded as the Hamitic chief who was first to come with his family and a few compatriots and occupy the area, after staying in the Ndorwa at a place called Mutara, which seems to have been the first stopping place of the Batutsi at the threshold of Ruanda?

Along with Ruganzu II, he is of all the ancient kings the one most often mentioned and the one whose legends are prized most highly by the people. According to a curious legend, one of his
[773] daughters is said to have discovered and domesticated the first cow, from which the others descended. The narrative built around this memorable event is very popular and contains several episodes. Gihanga is also regarded as the inventor of fire, which he bequeathed to his son and successor.

This alleged discovery has won Gihanga special honors. The official chroniclers maintain the most profound silence about the nine following kings, whose names alone they have preserved.

Did they all really exist? It is not easy to answer this question clearly, for we have not yet left the legendary realm. Gihanga, indeed, is regarded as the father of all men. His sons became the ancestors of all peoples. Kafomo, who is mentioned in the legend concerning the introduction of cows into Ruanda, gave birth to the Bashubbi (Basui), or people of Usui. /79/

Kanyarwanda, the heir to the throne, gave birth to the Banyarwanda. His immediate successor, Musindi, twelfth in the dynasty, is regarded as the founder of the Basindi, or Banyiginya, clan, the most powerful among the Batutsi (1).

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1. Most of the important families have picked out for themselves imaginary ancestors. Among some of them, however, the claimed ancestry is authentic.

[771] The sacrificer-diviners, known by the name of Abosha, claim to be descended from the famous Lunukamishyo,

"the man with the sorcerer's knives," who was originally from the Ndorwa and who left it for Ruanda. The important Batsobe family claims to be descended from Gatsobe and Nyirarutsobe, who aided Ruganzu II Ndori in his expedition against Nzira in the land of Bugara.

Families vie with each other to claim the most distant and most illustrious ancestors.

No matter how well devised they may be, these genealogies are practically worthless from a historical standpoint. At best one may regard as true the origin of the Abosha, who belong to the Basinga clan, and that of the Batsobe, who entered the great family of the Banyarwanda a little later.

One must come all the way to Ruganzu I Bwimba and Chyilima I Rugwe, the twentieth and twenty-first in the dynasty, in order to obtain a few historical details of a greater moment. The latter king is said to have been killed at Gasseke where his spirit (umuzimu) is still regularly "soothed" and "honored." The central province of Nduga, it seems, had not yet been invaded by the Batutsi. At that time they may, at best, have occupied the Buganza, the Gissaka, which formed a small Hamitic kingdom, possibly the Bugessera, and later the Bgana-Chambge and the Bumbogo. It is possible that Chyilima I died in the course of an expedition which he carried out to invade the Nduga.

With his two immediate successors, Kigeri I and the latter's son, Mibambge I Mutabasi, we enter an important and better-known historical period.

The present surface of Ruanda was still covered with tiny autonomous kingdoms.

The small provinces of Bukonya, Mulera, Buhoma, Bushiru, Luhengeri, Kingogo and Bgishaza, all of which are situated toward the north and west, formed as /80/ many mutually independent principalities. The situation was the same toward the south, in the Munyambiriri and the Kinyaga, where several petty kings ruled side by side as in Biguzi, Bukunzi, and Busozo. Toward the southwest the Burwe, also known as Mukindo or Ndala, may have been autonomous. The province of Bwana-Mkali was itself divided among several petty kings. There was practically no cohesion among those various groups, although they were for the most part of common origin.

The north is, indeed, populated by tribes who came from Mpororo and the Ndorwa. They are the Bahunde (1), who settled in the northwest, particularly in the Bugoyi. In the Kinyaga, toward the south, one finds a mixture of Bashi, or Banyabungu, who crossed the Ruzizi River, and Barundi, who have mixed with them. The inhabitants of the Burwe and Bwana-Mkali are also Barundi.

In the central province of Nduga there lived a group of individuals known by the name of Ababanda, who were divided into small groups and governed by several petty kings. The small lands of the Muhanga and especially that of the Marangara had a certain renown in local history. This will be discussed in the "History of a Reign" /Book III, not translated/. At that time, the most powerful of those petty kings was unquestionably the famous Mashira, who also possessed the Ndiza to the north in addition to most of the Nduga.

Legend claims that it was in his capacity as sorcerer that he was earnestly requested by Kigeri I, the Hamitic king who is believed to have lived at Mwurire near Kigali, to come to his aid. The

1. The "Bahunde" came from the northwest of Lake Kivu, from the various areas designated by the respective names of Kamuronsi, Gishari, Shari, Buyungu, Butembo, and Bwito.

173 Banyoro had invaded Kigeri's lands. Ntete, Ntende, Runda, Gasetsa, Urwara, Migongo, Ngungu, Munyaga, etc., all the villages situated to the northeast of his kingdom, had been overrun /81/ and pillaged by those new invaders who had just entered the Bwana-Chambge. In desperation and as a last resource, Kigeri called on Mashira to repel the Banyoro.

The native historians naïvely relate that the charms and spells of the sorcerer-king made Kigeri's troops victorious. One may read between the lines that the material aid which Mashira supplied to Kigeri in the form of his own warriors must have contributed a great deal to the final Batutsi victory (1).

1. The invasion of the Banyoro, the ravages they caused; and their defeat are the subject of a long narrative which, owing to its importance, will be discussed in Book V /not translated/.

Forgetful of the services rendered by the sorcerer-king, Mibambge-Mutabazi, who succeeded his father Kigeri, managed several years later to occupy the Nduga and to get rid of Mashira himself.

Under Mibambge-Mutabazi, the Batutsi invaded this province which is located in the heart of Ruanda. After Mashira's death, Mibambge settled at Ruchango near Butare, not far from Nyanza. It was also during his reign that the Bugessera was added to the Hamitic kingdom of Ruanda. Nsoro, the petty king of that land, also belonged to the Hamitic family.

According to tradition, the Bugessera was part of Urundi, where the Batutsi had already settled. One of them took over the government of the land and ruled over his fellow chiefs, who had distributed the hills (imisozi) among themselves. The chiefs from the Bugessera gradually broke the bonds which tied them to Urundi and proclaimed themselves independent. This resulted in long-drawn-out quarrels which weakened the small country and finally drew the attention of

Mibambge, who played the part of the "third thief." There were thus, at first, several adjacent Hamitic kingdoms established at variable /82/ intervals of time. We may already recognize Ruanda, Urundi, and the Bugessera whose existence was ephemeral. The Ndorwa and Gissaka also had their autonomous Hamitic kings. The small kingdom Gissaka managed to retain its independence until about 1850. The Ndorwa, although continually attacked by the kings of Ruanda, was never completely subjugated.

The sovereigns of the Ndorwa belonged to the Hamitic clan called "Abashambo," which was closely related to the Banyiginya group that supplied the kings of Ruanda. It seems, therefore, that at the time of their arrival in Ruanda, the Batutsi formed a compact group in order later to disperse at a given moment and to head off into various regions where they took the place of the autochthonous princes. We have seen that according to legend the sons of Gihanga gave rise to the various tribes, Banyarwanda, Banyagissaka, Bagessera /Gesera/, Barundi, Basui, etc. Whether one accepts the existence of Gihanga or deliberately doubts it as a myth, it is not farfetched to use it as an explanation of the preceding fact, that is to say, that the Batutsi emigrants, together at first on the northeastern frontier of Ruanda (Ndorwa, Mutara) and united under one of their own men, later headed off in various directions and partitioned that part of Africa among themselves.

Considering how few they were in relation to the rest of the aboriginal population, one may ask how they managed to take over the government of the lands we have just mentioned, including Uha, which borders Urundi to the south. No doubt there were local instances of resistance, since tradition has it that some Hamitic kings such as Chyilima I Rugwe and Ndahiro-Chyamatara lost their lives in the course of expeditions. Their forward march, however, was never checked in a definitive way. Their initial unity, their good practical sense, their intelligence, which was superior to that of the autochthonous Bahutu, and their /83/ skillful strategy were no small contributions to their military success.

Instead of tackling several petty kings at once, they outwitted them separately and challenged them in turn.

173 It is also possible that their physical height, the color of their skin, and their more civilized manners impressed the "Primitives" they had come to subjugate. They reached an understanding and allied themselves with those aboriginal princes who could be of some use to them, and sometimes got rid of them when the danger was past and they felt that they now were stronger. Kigeri I and his son Mibambge I acted thus toward Mashira. Ruganzu II utilized in like fashion the aid and assistance of the petty king of Marangara, the famous Nkoma.

Let us finally add that their relative moderation after a victory and their talent for government strengthened their rule over Ruanda and caused their new subjects to accept them.

There are numerous problems which are still difficult to solve completely. One of them is the question of the time when the Batutsi entered Ruanda. It is not possible to draw full historical conclusions from the famous "Barenge episode" either. If the legend which preserved it is not altogether false, the event may be set at the beginning of Mibambge I's reign, before the defeat and death of Mashira, which resulted in the conquest of the central province of Nduga by the Batutsi. The Barenge, or people from Rulenge, inhabited the Bwana-Mkali and formed a separate tribe distinct from the Ababanda, their Nduga neighbors. Tradition claims that the Barenge, in order to bring to an end the famine and drought that were devastating the land attempted on the advice of a sorcerer to pile up on one another and mount to the sky to fetch the rain there. /84/ The live pyramid, however, collapsed before the goal was reached, and the Barenge died from the fall, crushed or suffocated. This tragedy occurred at Mara, near the present Savé mission.

The chief, who was called by the name of Kimari, a son of Rulenge's, escaped the disaster along with several members of his family but soon met with an unhappy end. The narrative, which is quite confused, adds that Mibambge apparently had something to do with the catastrophic event symbolized by the collapse of a human pyramid, and that Mashira inherited the succession from Kimari, at least for a while. What did actually happen, and how did events develop? The legend, such as it was passed down to us, is mysterious.

173 One does not know how to interpret it. Was it Mibamgbe who instigated the annihilation of the Barenge or, if one holds to the narrative only, did he merely profit from Mashira's success, if the latter actually attacked and conquered the Barenge?

So many questions which are not easily solved, since anachronisms and contradictions abound. The clearest fact is that the Barenge were attacked and fell prey to disastrous events. It does not seem sensible to lay on the Batutsi all responsibility for the struggle to the death that befell the inhabitants of Mara. The Batutsi, indeed, after vanquishing the aboriginal princes, had thoughts only for the government and administration of the subjugated populations, from which they drew their subsistence as true feudal lords. Granting that there were excesses on their part and that their victims were numerous, one may rest assured that given their mentality and customs, they would not wage an actual war of extermination on the tribes they had come to subjugate. They needed them for their own subsistence.

Should one regard the Barenge, on the other hand, as the first autochthonous inhabitants of the area upon whom their Nduga neighbors, /85/ the Ababanda, waged a merciless war as primitive peoples are wont to do, since the rule of might is axiomatic to them?

[172] The pottery remnants ascribed rightly or wrongly to the Barenge would also tend to lend them a distinct origin (1). The name "Barenge" is no longer borne by any present-day tribe. The natives believe that they all disappeared in the disaster.

Yuhi I, the Hamitic successor to Mibambge I, hardly left any traces in history. He was the twenty-fourth in the dynasty.

His reign is mentioned /by the chroniclers/ only to bring up a fact which is rather insignificant from our point of view. Rushara, one of his favorite sons, became a "rain maker" in spite of himself, as the result of a mishap,, and gave rise to the clan called Bashara whose members still have today the reputation for "making rain and good weather."

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1. The so-called "Barenge episode" is described separately in Book V /not translated/, owing to its importance.

173 Under Ndahiro-Chyamatara, twenty-fifth in the royal lineage, the Batutsi star suffered a pronounced eclipse. The reign of this prince ended in disaster. His death is the subject of a long narrative which is recounted in the "History of Ruganzu's Reign" /Book III, not translated/. According to that episode, he sought death of his own accord in the Bugoyi forest. According to another version which seems more likely, he died at Russokovu in the Bugamba where he is said to have fallen, weapons in hand, in the course of an ill-starred expedition against the inhabitants of the area whom he apparently wished to subjugate. The region was known thereafter as the "hammer-cursed land" (i Rubi rw'inyundo), meaning that the weapons wrought with hammers produced unfortunate results in that area since they caused [796] the death of the king and the elite of his men. It is believed that the annual June mourning observed at the capital (igichurassi) is held [769] in memory and commemoration of this tragic occurrence.

This defeat had baneful consequences for the /86/ Hamitic kingdom, which until then had made continual headway in the interior of the land. Legend and tradition have drawn the picture on the dark side by stressing the tragic events.

A certain Nsibura, chief of the Banyabyinshi, who lived to the southwest of Ruanda, overran the land as a conqueror, subjugating everyone on his path. The kingdom's misfortunes had no end, say the bards, until the day when the son and successor of the hapless prince, Ruganzu II Ndori, claimed his ancestral throne by force of arms.

Following the disaster which took the life of his father, the young prince had fled to the court of the King of Karagwe, where he was raised by his paternal aunt, the Queen. Upon his return to Ruanda, circumstances were kind to him.

His chief opponent, Nsibura, had just died in the Bugessera forest of an accident dramatized by legend. His energetic and determined character helped him a great deal in his undertakings. Ruganzu greatly expanded the boundaries of the kingdom left to him by his ancestors. No one did more than he for the unity of the monarchy.

The last autochthonous petty kings who had weathered the Hamitic invasion were subjugated by him. The Bugara beyond the

173 Mulera lakes, the Munyambiriri, Kinyaga, Bwana-Mkali, Burwe, etc., henceforth became an integral part of the Crown territories. Like his predecessors, /Ruganzu/marched on the Ndorwa where he killed a relative of the king, a certain Kanyoni, and then on the Bunyabungu to the southwest of Lake Kivu, but those were short-lived conquests.

His successors were no more successful in this regard. The inhabitants of the two afore-mentioned regions never allowed themselves to be assimilated permanently by the Banyarwanda. Ruganzu had no fixed residence; he /87/ spent his entire life waging war, hence his name of "Conqueror" or "Eminently Victorious" (*Kuganza*).

Only two small principalities are /at this point/ discerned in the present territory of Ruanda, the "Busozo," a sort of vassal land, and "Marangara," which Ruganzu permitted to survive. The potentate showed a certain respect for their independence in view of the benefits he might derive from them. The petty king of the latter region, who was then Nkoma, had the reputation of being a powerful magician. It is still said today that "Nkoma of Marangara, the son of Nkondogoro,
538 knew how to bewitch a great deal better than it is done today." (*Nkoma ya Nkondogoro ikilozi cho mu Marangara kitaloger' abasa nk'aba none*.)

Ruganzu did not dare undermine his prestige but chose to make him an ally instead. The Hamitic kingdom of Gisaka was not disturbed either. As we have already said, no one knows the exact date when it was founded. It may have originated at the same time as Ruanda.

Only 11 of its kings are known. The first one, Kimenyi I, was a contemporary of Ruganzu II. Relations between the two courts must have been good at certain times since we find that a king of Ruanda, Kigeri II Ndabarasa, married a Gisaka princess, the sister of Kimenyi II Getula. This harmony came to an end, however, on the day when the Gisaka kings seized the Buganza and Bwana-Chambge, which, incidentally, they did not retain very long.

The son and successor of Ruganzu, Mutara I Nsoro, enlarged the kingdom to the southeast by driving the Barundi, who occupied part of the Bwana-Mkali province, beyond the Akanyaru River. Tradition adds that the decisive contest was fought near the Save

173 Mission. The King of Urundi lost his life there, and the victors seized his ceremonial garment (inkindi), which is still preserved as a trophy in the royal treasure (intore).

This historical piece survived the Ruchunchu disaster /88/, when fire consumed the many pieces and objects belonging to the royal wardrobe. The afore-mentioned vestment is none other than a colobus pelt (inkomo), such as the Batutsi chiefs and kings used to wear.

[522] This garment was rather small, and as a result it is called derisively in the story "the overly short garment" that did not match the size of its owner (1). Laughter and jokes come readily to the Blacks.

As far as we know, no outstanding event took place under the three following monarchs.

Under the thirty-first, Chyilima II Ludjugira, on the other hand, the struggle with the Barundi was renewed. This war is the subject of a long narrative embellished and distorted by legend. According to it, the Banyarwanda declared war on the Barundi as the result of a drought and in order to bring it to an end. Under the same reign, an alien tribe invaded the Bugoyi, on the east shore of Lake Kivu, and was repelled with great difficulty. The historical character of this second episode is better preserved. "It concerns a people," so the elders narrate, "of light complexion, who spoke a language different from ours and who built their houses differently."

They had the peculiar habit of covering their dwellings with earth. Their tools, axes, and hoes, were better wrought and more durable than those of the autochthonous inhabitants. They were designated as "Those who cover their roofs with earth" (Abassakazataka) or the "Mutes" (Ibiragi) because of their incomprehensible language. The newcomers had settled in the Bugoyi province, which is separated from the Nduga by the forest, and they were soon quarreling with the

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1. The literal meaning is more vivid and "spicy." Ntizihish' amabuno!

few native dwellers who had settled in a small part of that volcanic region. It was in vain that the latter banded together to repel the stangers. The "Mutes" remained victorious and /89/ repelled their assailants. Then Chyilima's help was requested, and he sent an army to their aid. The intruders were hewed to pieces, and the survivors fled to the north and never returned.

Who were those strangers, and where did they come from? Tradition is silent on both counts. One must resort to hypotheses in order to identify them. History says that they were "white" (1), that they built with earth, and that their tools were better.

We are inclined to believe that they were a Congo tribe who had come from the northwest of Lake Kivu at a time when the fearsome Warega /Rega/ cannibals were putting the adjacent lands to fire and sword.

It was probably for the same reason that the ancestors of the Bagoyi left their homeland (Gishari, Buyungu, etc.) and settled to the northeast of the lake where they founded a clan /? fait souche/.

It is also said that the last king of the Ndorwa was vanquished by Chyilima's troops. This is not absolutely certain, since the same victory is ascribed to one of his predecessors and to two or three of his successors. It may nevertheless be said that until about 1890 the ill-starved populations of the Mpororo, and especially those of the Ndorwa, never knew any peace. Nearly all the kings of Ruanda sent expeditions there although they did not do so in person.

As we have already mentioned, the inhabitants of the area were never thoroughly subjugated. Once the troops had departed, the survivors would leave their hiding places and live again from day to day until the next attack. This is why the land always remained poor and almost without herds.

Little is known about the three sovereigns who succeeded Chyilima. /90/

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1. The Bagoyi surely exaggerated on this score. Cf. Book V /not translated/.

173 The last one, Yuhi III Gahindiro, is mentioned only in connection with the fact that he raised a Mutwa /Batwa/ to noble rank and gave him his own daughter (Mulangamirwa) in marriage. The descendants of this couple make up the Basiete clan.

Where did those monarchs live? Which were their capitals?

The ancient royal residences (*ibigabiro*, *ibisozi*, *imirwa*), which are easily recognizable by the clumps of trees that mark the sites, are found most everywhere through the various provinces of Ruanda. They are found especially in the vicinity of Kigali, in the Nduga, after one crosses the Nyabarongo River, along the road to Nyanza and beyond, up to the Bwana-Mkali. Judging by the number of their dwellings, it seems that the Hamitic princes had made this central part of Ruanda their most select location, their favorite abode.

Matrimonial relations between conquerors and conquered were so frequent in the Nduga that the Bahutu of that province are strongly tinted with Hamitic blood. In order to explain the profusion of ancient residences, it must be added that certain monarchs such as Ruganzu II and Lwabugiri moved about readily and had many residences while their predecessors maintained only three or four (1).

103 1. Royal residences around Kigali: Ntora, Kabuye, Rutare, Mwulire, etc.

In the Nduga:

Gibara (Lwogera and Lwabugiri), Runda (Musinga), Ishèru (Lwogera), Idjuru (Yuhi-Mazimpaka), Rukoma (Mibambge), Kanshyiri (Lwogera), Rugobagoba (Lwogera), Kamonyi (Lwabugiri and Musinga), Buhoro and Kivumu (Gahindiro), Mata, Lwamabare, Nyundo, etc.

In the Bwana-Mkalé:

Buhimba (Lwogera and Lwabugiri), Gikirambga (Mutara), Gisseke (Lwabugiri, Musinga), Ishyanda (Lwogera, Lwabugiri), Mwurire, Kisanze, Lussagara, etc.

Mutara II Lwogera, grandfather of the present king, brings us to the vicinity of 1845. The most /91/ important event of his reign was the final conquest of the Hamitic kingdom of Gissaka, which had been split by internal divisions. One of the great chiefs of this land, having been dispossessed of his property, appealed to the king of Ruanda, who took advantage of this opportunity to send his troops there.

This event took place between 1850 and 1860. Mutara died shortly after this handsome accomplishment. It is believed that he died of consumption. He first lived at Batsinda near Rugobagoba, then at Kivumu not far from Kabgaye. The central province of Nduga always remained the most important one. The Hamitic kings spent the greater part of their reign there.

It was at the time of Mibambge I Mutabazi, twenty-third in the dynasty and victor over the sorcerer-king Mashira, that the Batutsi began to make the Nduga their favorite land. This is why the "sacred groves" (ibigabiro) that mark the location of the ancient royal residences (imirwa) stand there in a nearly unbroken line.

Kigeri IV Lwabugiri, who died as recently as 1895, was the prince whose mode of life most resembled that of his ancestor Ruganzu II Ndori.

Like him, he spent all his life making war. The regions situated to the northeast of Ruanda, the Bukonya, Mulera, Buhoma, Bushiru, etc., although nominally subjugated from the time of Ruganzu II, had never proved quite submissive toward the Batutsi and had retained an irreverent and unruly attitude toward their conquerors. Lwabugiri paid them frequent visits.

Those mountain peoples, who were impressed by his fame as a warrior, did not offer any resistance. He marched with his troops through the Nkole, Ndorwa, Urundi, and Bunyabungu, which he would have liked to join, at least in part, to Ruanda.

Those were profitless expeditions /92/ that caused great losses in terms of men and brought no real benefits to the Crown, in spite of the booty acquired. His /Lwabugiri's/ only lasting conquest was that of the isle of Idjwi. The epidemic which felled the prince caught him at Kiranga, at the time when he was headed for the Bunyabungu to the southwest of Lake Kivu for the fourth time at least.

173 His reign, being recent, is well known, and the tale of his expeditions is still to be heard from the lips of those of his contemporaries who survived him. His popularity is almost equal to that of his grandfather Ruganzu II, whose deeds and actions, badly distorted by legend as they are, have been preserved and are still the subject of many a fireside conversation. Lwabugiri's shifts of mood were most interesting. [147] His revenges, like his bloodthirsty whims, were short lived. He would raise the children of his victims and adopt young captives for whom he took a fancy, shower them with wealth, and admit them into his family.

His immediate successor, Mibambge IV Rutalindwa, barely remained on the throne for a year. He was overthrown by Kabale, the most powerful chief of the Hamitic Bega clan.

So as not to fall alive into the hands of his enemies, the vanquished king took his own life. Mussinga, one of Lwabugiri's youngest sons, was immediately enthroned under the name of Yuhi IV.

Through his mother Kanjogera, he was a nephew of the ambitious Kabale, who was regent before the young prince came of age. The Banyiginya clan, from which the royal family is issued and which had until then wielded a preponderant influence at court, was stripped of its property. The most outstanding chiefs of the vanquished party were relentlessly killed by the Bega people, who divided the government of the provinces among themselves over the corpses of their victims. The Bega men, embittered because they had been kept away from public affairs, were avenging once and for all the inferior position in which they felt /93/ they had been held for such a long time by their rivals.

One may ask whether Kabale when he gave his nephew the royal name of Yuhi did not do so intentionally.

643
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551 Two categories of kings are distinguished: warrior kings and peaceful kings (from the verb guteka, "to sit." (1))

[1] The same verb guteka also means "to cook" (kupika in Kiswahili).

The name which is given to them on the day of their enthronement binds and commits them throughout their reign to a certain course of

643 action. "Ruganzu" is a war name, and so is "Kigeri." Ruganzu II
173 Ndori, as recounted by one tradition, had suffered so much (*yari
551 yarushye chyane*) that in order to spare his successors as much as possible of the anxieties, sorrows, and fatigue he had endured, he demanded that his name of "Ruganzu" should vanish forever with him into the grave. He thought that he would reduce thereby the number of future wars. The titles of "mutara" and "Yuhi" commit to peace those to whom they are given, who are not permitted to cross rivers (*ntibambuk' uruzi*). To break this "taboo" would make them and their realm subject to great misfortunes.

701 Thus, it was not Mutara himself who conquered the Gissaka. In case of a necessary war or expedition, the sovereign appoints two generals, one of whom (*umugabe*) has command of military operations while the other holds a mere honorary rank. He is said to exercise an occult and magic influence over the opponents, who cannot fail to be conquered if he fulfills his role properly. In the course of his expeditions, Lwabugiri always had at his side one of those generals with superstitious functions. They are called *Abagaba*.

Book IV

(First Fascicle)

The Royal Court

(Its Posts, Privileges, Mores, and Customs)

644 /348/ The object of the present study is the organization of the royal court, its posts and offices, its customs and festivals (1).

1. In order to designate the court and capital as they are here and now, the Banyarwanda use the word

644 ibgami, "at the king's."
In speaking of the ancient
royal residences, they use
the noun umurwa, plural
imirwa, or else ikigabiro,
plural ibigabiro. As for the
term umuhango (plural
imihango), it signifies "mores,
customs, traditions," hence
the name Abanyamihango given
to the "keepers of the customs."

[642] We remind the reader that the native government is an absolute and hereditary monarchy.

643 The sovereign is master of the land and all it contains; he deals with the life and goods of his subjects as he pleases. Until recently his power knew no bounds of any sort and was wholly dependent upon [776] his whims or good will. Imana (God) was no more powerful than he. Any attempt to draw a comparison between the two was formerly [687] regarded as a crime of high treason. God and the King could, at best, be one and the same person.

641 The subjects, therefore, tended to be regarded as things from which to draw as much pleasure and well-being as possible.

Their own worth and usefulness were assessed and measured only with reference to the king. Let us add that the welfare of the kingdom, although it was not disregarded, could only come second in the thoughts of the king. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, 644 the dignitaries of the realm to whom the king assigned the government of the provinces were compelled to spend most of their time at court. The Hamitic princes were very eager to keep the nobility close to them. They were always on the alert and daily surveyed the lords and courtiers who surrounded them (2). The latter belong /349/ almost

2. From Saint Simon we learn
that the situation was the same
under Louis XIV. "It is a demerit

entirely to the noble and conquering Batutsi group. They are lords and courtiers, and they too live only for the king, his service, and his pleasure. In those territories lying under their jurisdiction the Batutsi, in turn, exercised the same powers as the monarch. The disadvantages and excesses of such an autocratic system are easy to imagine. The gift of government cannot be denied, however, to the Batutsi and their princes. They have had at all times an aptitude for organization and administration. Within a short period of time, thanks to their subtlety and talent, they succeeded in building a single kingdom upon the ruins of some 50 autonomous principalities, and in lending it stability.

Nyanza is the name of the present capital in the Nduga province. It is made up of a vast agglomeration of huts which stand apart from each other.

The group formed by the aggregate of royal huts is by far the most important. There live the king, the queen mother, and their servants (1). The chiefs are settled in the vicinity. So as not to offend the sensibilities of the king, they must see to it that their huts and courtyards are of modest dimensions. The other inhabitants, who are gathered all around, are there only for His Majesty's sake. The capital may thus be compared to a vast beehive where the jobs are

for the most distinguished courtiers," he says, "not to make of the court their daily abode, and for the others to appear there only rarely. It is a sure disgrace for anyone to fail completely or almost completely to appear."

1. With rare exceptions the royal wives have little influence. They are rarely mentioned. Their august spouse may cast them away at the slightest whim.

644 varied and numerous but all aimed at a single end, the service and entertainment of the king.

"The capital is filled, populated, and occupied for the sake of the life of a single man. It is but a royal residence, set up exclusively to attend to the needs, pleasures, service, protection, entertainment, and display of the king." (Taine.) "The king's household contains a veritable /350/ multitude of servants divided into various departments under the orders of high officials (Seignobos)." These two quotations, which refer to Versailles, may be applied to Nyanza and the court of Musinga if due allowances are made.

The operation of those departments regarded as indispensable to the life of the court demands an extensive staff that would fill a telephone directory. Lord of the Palace, Chief of the "Mouth" Department, Majordomo, High Keeper of the Treasure, High Cup Bearer or Butler, ushers, pages, chamberlains, valets, Keepers of the Wardrobe, physicians or rather quacks, etc., all have their equivalent at the court of His Black Majesty.

644 344 Of course, one must not imagine a Versailles with its delightful gardens. Musinga's royal residence consists of a vast enclosure of ficus trees and woven rushes and reeds. Its main opening is one meter wide. Toward the front, some 30 paces from the entrance, stands the large royal hut of branches and thatch.

It is dark inside. As in all local huts, light enters only through the door.

A multitude of wooden pillars rise within to support the roof. Along the inner walls stand a row of cubicles closed by large screens of artistically braided local rushes. The hearth lies in the center of the floor, protected by a sort of large clay rosette. This is the main hall, where only Europeans and courtiers are admitted. It also serves as bedroom to the king and his mother.

The vast enclosure is divided into several courtyards in which stand the huts of the queen mother, her daughters-in-law, and their male and female followers. Within the enclosure, here and there, stand the hut where the palladium-drum is kept, the one where the sacred fire is preserved, and the numerous huts dedicated to the shades of the royal /ancestors/.

644 [343] One sees standing about what seem to be huge baskets covered with thatch roofs. They are granaries where the food of the employees is kept. The storeroom is the king's favorite spot. He takes pleasure in hoarding there the most disparate objects: fabrics, crockery, furniture, and trinkets of all sorts. It is said that it gives him infinite [157] pleasure to survey his "bazaar" and to handle the goods piece by piece, away from all prying eyes.

It is easy to imagine the life and bustle that prevail at court and in the capital.

The entire nation dwells in the person of the king. He alone represents it. Since the State is identified with the king, he alone is eternally mentioned. "Everything is done for his sake. Justice is the king's justice, troops are the king's army, the nobility fights for him.... The monarch is absolute master and naturally has full and complete command over the property owned by his subjects, and when he takes it he is only taking what belongs to him.... Whoever is born a subject must obey without question...."

This short account of the history of Louis XIV's reign fittingly describes the rights exercised by the Hamitic kings of Ruanda. As a result of this concept and attitude on the part of the Blacks, nearly all the clans or family groups which make up the population of Ruanda have a role to fulfill at court, not so much for the welfare of the realm as for the pleasure of the king. The functions they must exercise are many and vary with the nature of the people involved and the products of the soil on which they live. Some of the posts derive from historical circumstances. Among these offices, some are regarded as an honor and privilege and others as a chore. Some offices are also assigned as punishment or /352/ revenge for misdeeds which were committed in the past by ancestors and the very memory of which has been lost. Most of those posts amount to actual bondage for their holders.

Positions of a mere utilitarian nature are by far the most numerous.

644 538 It is surprising to hear that literary pleasures and entertainments are included in the court program and even stand in a separate category. By the sovereign's side, indeed, there stand official historians and

644 538 appointed bards (abachurabgenge), as well as literary jousters or men of choice language called Abasizi, whose only role is to refresh the king's memory or to beguile his leisure with tasteful improvisations. Even the commoners are not insensitive to literature. There is not a single Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ who is not keenly interested in the legends, narratives, fables, moral or humorous tales, riddles, plays on words, jokes, etc., belonging to the oral literature.

644 Every post at the capital has its own traditions which must be scrupulously observed. We shall attempt to provide a short description of the duties and regulations connected with those offices, and of the practices and formalities to which the king must submit on the one hand and his subjects on the other.

The reader should not be surprised to hear that there is etiquette and ceremonial at court.

It is easy to imagine the oddity of a circle such as that of the court, where such varied figures rub shoulders within such a relatively small space: lords, courtiers, disciples of Aesculapius and vulgar charlatans, servants, sorcerers and diviners of various sorts, caterers, stewards, dancers, pages, keepers of the traditions, official chroniclers, literary men, etc., to list but a few. /353/ This whole world exists, thinks, and acts for the sake of the king alone. It is a true medieval court with, moreover, pagan mores where the element of sorcery predominates.

128 Laymen unfamiliar with Africa will be able to form an idea of what a king and his court represent in a Black land. What we shall say of the former political situation, the royal mores that prevailed, the human tributes and bloody bondage, will not only describe the [643] ancient times but also demonstrate the respect that surrounded the person of the king, who was regarded by his subjects as a demigod. When viewed in the past, his bloody whims, far from being injurious to his reputation, only served to strengthen his power and his majesty. Primitive souls are awed by displays of brute force.

Among other interesting details, one will find in these pages the more or less rational origin, derived from legend or history, of many a practice and custom that still exists today.

128 Among those customs, let us mention the preservation and
upkeep of a dog-faced baboon at the capital, the watch over the
sacred fire bequeathed by one of the dynastic forebears, the worship
of the royal drum which is regarded as the "palladium" of the realm,
the existence of sacred cows and their presentation at important
[527] ceremonies, the yearly celebration of the festival called the "first-
fruits festival, " and the observance of a day of rest every five days.
No less interesting, from an ethnological standpoint, are the passages
describing the funeral customs observed at the death of a king and
those referring to cemeteries, royal groves, and the royal ancestral
spirits, including the annual June mourning observed at court in
memory of an ancient prince. The reader will hear of the special
franchises and immunities accorded to certain tribes, and of the
prerogatives, privileges, and varied duties of the other groups. Some
of those large families have /354/ the special function of supplying
His Black Majesty with sorcerers, keepers of the traditions, rain makers,
royal undertakers (who form a closed corporation), etc. (1). In order

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500 1. The political and social organization of the Banyarwanda is slightly reminiscent of the caste system which is found in the early history of many groups, whether political, religious, or even mere professional castes are involved.

Thus among the Hebrews, the tribe of Levi had a monopoly on sacerdotal functions. Among the Greeks the Asclepiades, who claimed to descend from Aesculapius, transmitted the secrets of medicine to one another from generation to generation. In Rome there were the two great political castes of patricians and plebeians. Even at the present

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5

time India is the classical land of
castes, where various classes of
people remain completely separated.

128 to clarify the pages that follow, we shall use the following outline to describe the duties and privileges at court.

The few details given in the short list of posts and dignities will provide an initial understanding of the mores and customs which may prevail at a court of this sort.

In order to round out the picture we wish to convey, it will then suffice to mention, among other things, the safeguards which the king feels he must demand from his employees, the dangers to which the latter were exposed by the nature of their functions, and a few other practices and formalities which the sovereign and his subjects are compelled to observe.

The last two chapters will bear on the two great festivals at court and the strange funeral rites observed at the death of a king. Our data are far from complete: there is too much to be told, and the sources of information are too inadequate. European penetration into those lands is hardly 25 years old. Up to the time of the Great European War, the natives and especially the "great ones" (Abatutsi) remained on their guard. Tongues are just beginning to loosen a little. The historical and ethnological harvest in Ruanda is barely beginning. For these reasons, /355/ the following pages will provide only a short account.

It is nevertheless to be feared that the numerous and strange practices that still largely govern the present life of the court may soon disappear one by one and make room for progress and modern civilization. We believe, therefore, that we did well in presenting to the reader a brief and concise survey of these practices before they sink into oblivion.

While giving choice place to the customs of the court and the mores of the Hamites, we shall not hesitate, whenever the opportunity arises, to wander from the rather narrow boundaries indicated and defined by the title of Book IV. Whenever suitable, and without leaving the subject at hand, we shall broaden its scope to include customs

128 common to the three ethnic groups which make up the Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/ nation, or peculiar to one group or another.

Chapter 1.

644 I. Posts and Offices of a Historical and Superstitious Nature.
231 The Keepers of the Customs and Traditions.
778 The "King" of the First Fruits and the "King" of the Imandwa.

1. Maintenance at court of a dog-faced baboon and a sacred bull.

It will be recalled that according to legend, when the enemies of Ruganzu II the Victorious attempted to smoke him out of a cave, /356/ he was saved by dog-faced baboons (inguge), who led him through subterranean tunnels to another exit. One of those animals is kept at the capital in order to commemorate this fantastic legend.

The clan in charge of caring for the animal is known under the name of Abanyamuheno, that is to say, "Men of the Cave," in memory of the event.

The monkey, tied with a chain, is fed by his keepers with sweet potatoes, beans, grains, sorghum stalks, etc.

When he gets old he is released in the forest where he was captured when young, and another monkey is sought out to replace him.

Is not this custom reminiscent of honored practices at the court of the Pharaohs, where dog-faced baboons were also raised?

[233] Ruanda is a land of pastures. The Batutsi possess numerous herds of cattle which are, rightly enough, the pride and joy of their owners.

It is not surprising to hear, therefore, that aside from the sacred herds that will be mentioned in the last chapter but one of this book there is a bull at court that is the object of special care and attentions.

644 This animal is known by the name of Rusanga and lives with a
231 few cows who bear the same designation, insanga (plural of Rusanga).

778 The bull is brought onto royal grounds from time to time, when sacrifices are performed, in its capacity as official representative of all the kingdom's cattle. Usually flanked by two cows, the bull is goaded forward by its keepers to the shelter consecrated to the spirits.
[769 The king or the sorcerer who officiates in his name presents the
782] animals to the royal ancestral spirits. "Here," he says, "are the herds which you have left us. We go on caring for them, and their numbers grow incessantly. Divert epizootic diseases from our cattle /357/ and spare us calamities of all kinds. Make events favorable to us, and the Europeans (who occupy the land) benevolent!" etc.

In the mind of the Hamites, the observance of this rite is
[773] connected with the memory of Gihanga and his daughter Nyirarutchaba, who are credited with the introduction of cattle into Ruanda.

There is every reason to believe that in both practical and implicit fashion, the Batutsi honor thereby the memory of the Hamitic prince who actually introduced the first beeves into the country. The legend of Nyirarutchaba gradually replaced the historical event.

If one grants, on the other hand, that the Batutsi are descended from the Egyptians or from a related people, it should not be surprising to find certain vestiges of the Apis cult at the Ruanda court.

The existence of sacred herds called inyambo, and their presentation at important festivals may be interpreted in similar fashion. Their visit to the capital under the above-mentioned circumstances has the same meaning and the same sacrificial character.

Once the ceremony is completed, the animals are led back to pasture near the capital.

When the bull dies it must be replaced immediately with another. The selection which takes place is known under the name of "enthronement" or "new reign" (kwimika in Runyarwanda). This shows the importance of the event itself and the value attached to this curious tradition.

Although the Banyarwanda are extremely fond of meat and
[262] even eat the corpses of animals, they are strictly forbidden to taste
[766] the flesh of the sacred bull. The animal is buried, and so are the
inyambo.

644
231 inyambo. The individual who is placed in charge of Rusanga is called
778 /358/ Nkwaya and belongs to the Banyiginya clan. This is a position of trust.

The insanga are well known by the inhabitants of the capital.

2. The chief of protocol and the "king" of the first fruits.

644 There exists a complicated ceremonial and a series of rites whose teaching would soon be lost if their preservation were not entrusted to a group of personages who supervise their observance scrupulously at the monarch's side. They do not fail to call him to order occasionally on this score.

The most important of those directors of protocol, or masters of ceremony, is unquestionably the chief of the Batsobe clan. His is a select position by the side of the sovereign, whom he counsels and directs in those matters which are within his competence. His name will come up again in the pages that follow (1).

(1). The Batsobe played an exalted role in the Ruchunchu coup d'état. As a reward, the spoils of the vanquished were distributed among them. Their major fees are the Bumbogo, Luhanga, Bussigi, etc.

Under the ultimate supervision of this high dignitary, one family is in charge of cultivating in the sacred land of Bumbogo the sorghum and eleusine which are later brought to court for the yearly "first-fruits festival." We shall speak of this later when we discuss festivals.

The head of this family is sometimes called "king of the first fruits" (umwami w'umuganura). The father and founder of the Batsobe clan, as we have already mentioned, was raised to noble rank and brought into Ruanda by the Hamitic king, Ruganzu II, as a result of the latter's expedition into Bugara lands, north of the Mulera, against the petty king Nzira, son of Mulamira. In connivance with his mother, the ancestor of the Batsobe had sheltered the disguised

644 monarch under his roof and had given him the information which permitted the Mututsi /Batutsi/ king to vanquish his rival.

3. In memory of King Gihanga, who offered the gift of fire to his son and successor, Kanyarwanda, a group of individuals chosen
[778 from the Abiru clan must watch /359/ day and night over the fire
372] which is kept burning in the hut dedicated to that great king. The fire is preserved in a huge jar. In the old days the keepers risked their lives if they allowed the fire to go out.

4. The king of the "initiates" (umwami w'imwanda).

794 This post still has a holder today. His name is Kabano, and
173 he succeeded Sherangabo, who had been designated at first to fill this role.

The Hamitic prince was compelled to resign. He was blamed, among other things, for having brought the Europeans into the land, because Count von Götzen had met him at Lwamagona in the Buganza when he entered Ruanda and had taken him along as his guide. This was a mere pretext, however, for the real grievance stemmed from his royal origins. Like Musinga, a son of Lwabugiri, he was both older and better entitled to the throne by far.

The substitute who was placed at the head of the "initiates" is a Mututsi commoner. The title he bears retains its high sound, but the position has lost its importance.

Since the Hamitic monarch, according to custom, could not belong to this secret society, he himself named its chief, who represented to some extent the person of the king and fulfilled in his place the rites in honor of Ryangombe.

The king of the "initiates" formerly had certain privileges, and the members of the society could request his aid and protection in litigations. The position has become strictly honorific.

This religious society is very interesting. Its adepts are re-
[769] cruited from the various tribes in the nation and render continual honors to their founding ancestors, Ryangombe, Binego, Mugasa, Kagoro, Muzana, etc., through imitations of their purely physical actions, chants about their exploits, and offerings of libations or sacrifices.

All questions relating to the origins of this society remain mysterious. It is not known under what circumstances /360/ or at what

794 time it came into being, or where and by whom it was first established.
173 It seems to be of foreign origin, although it has made important strides in Ruanda proper. It has been noted that the neighboring
[171] peoples to the north, south, east and west of Ruanda indulge in a similar cult (1). Did Ryangombe and his companions really exist?

1. In the work entitled *Entre le Victoria, l'Albert et l'Édouard* /Between Lakes Victoria, Albert, and Edward/ the author, Mgr. Gorju, discloses details about this secret society which lead one to believe that it is of Hamitic origin and that it was introduced into Ruanda by the Hamites.

"In the Bunyoro each tribe has its high *Muchwezi*, or acknowledged protector. Thus ... the Bagweri claim to be under Mugasa's protection....

"Aside from these protectors peculiar to each tribe, however, there are universal protectors common to all tribes who have specialized in some menial function... such as Kagoro, the god of lightning (p. 202). There is a group (of these demigods, or genii) in which individuals were included under the name of *bachwezi*, such as Nyabatwa and Nyabakonjo, whose legendary history hardly corroborates a kinship with the authentic Bachwezi (three powerful figures whose trail is suddenly

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lost)... (p. 203).

"In the Bunyoro the Bachwezi cult was superimposed on the local religion whose primary objects of worship were no other than the spirits of the ancestors and the Creator himself."

(Luhanga, Nyamuhanga, among the Bahima of Uganda), p. 218.

(Sub-army /sub L'armee?/ (society) of the mbandwa).

The same author speaks also of Muzana, the servant girl honored by the initiates.

Fr. César, in turn, lists the same figures, including Rungu (Nyabirungu among the Banyarwanda) in his study, "Comment les Bahaya interprètent leurs origines /How the Bahaya Interpret their Origins/," Anthropos, 1927.

Yes, if the legends are to be believed, but the details they provide are not sufficiently accurate to make us accept the reality of their existence. What are the bonds of kinship or subordination which unite Ryangombe and the figures who are grouped at his side in the worship and ceremonies held in his honor?

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There does exist a sort of mythology that classifies some of those figures, but others were introduced into some of the provinces at a later time and are more or less unknown. Some of them nevertheless have historical associations, and their claimed patronage arouses certain conjectures. /361/ We wonder whether the Banyarwanda may have introduced into this sort of religious pantheon sorcerers, ancient petty kings, and political figures who played an important role in the land. The Blacks, being superstitious, timorous, eager to avert the wrath of ancestral spirits and anxious to gain their protection, have

173 rendered them a special worship. The Hamites were perhaps the first
776 to organize this religious group in the newly conquered land. The
794 Bahutu (or Bantu) were not excluded from it. Their admission was a
political act on the part of the immigrants (1).

> 1. It is not impossible that the Hamites found the imwandwa society already organized when they arrived in Uganda, and later in Ruanda, and that they immediately adopted it and had themselves initiated into it to serve their own ends. As we can see, the problems relating to the origins of this religious society remain unsolved. Any hypothesis may be offered until the day when light will be brought on the subject.

By conviction and perhaps also in a spirit of diplomacy, in order to win their subjects over, the conquering Batutsi, killers of the magician-petty kings, did not hesitate to invoke the spirits of their victims and to honor them in cult ceremonies.

The Romans acted similarly toward foreign divinities, and admitted them willingly into the pantheon of the Empire.

According to this interpretation, should Ryangombe and his initial companions be placed in the category of aboriginal princes? If one accepts the facts set forth in the Banyarwanda legend, such a supposition is not impossible. The mythological narrative represents Ryangombe as a sort of independent prince (umuhinza), whose residence was at Kibingo in the small province of Nyakale. The legend says that Ryangombe went hunting to please his wife Nyanzige, daughter of the great king, Ruganzu II, who had asked him for a buffalo hide in which to wrap (ingobyi) her newborn child. He found one of those /362/ formidable animals and even wounded it, but was charged by the beast and killed at a spot about two hours distant from his dwelling,

173 Nyabikenke, which became thereby historical and accursed. His sons
776 and companions avenged his death and killed Nyanzige, who was the
indirect cause of the misfortune. The initiates of the Ryangombe cult
794 also deified Ruganzu's daughter and made her a liberator (Umutabazi).
It may have been the children and followers of Ryangombe who ennobled the end of this unfortunate woman for political reasons, so as to escape the anger and reprisals of the vindictive monarch.

Nyanzige is designated in ritual ceremonies by the name of Nyagishya or Inzobe, that is to say, "pale-faced woman," on account of her complexion.

The Bagoyi attribute Ryangombe's death to another one of his relatives, a young girl whom he had previously seduced after offering her a heady drink of hydromel. "I will have my revenge," cried the adolescent girl. "You will find me along the way, changed into a buffalo, and your blood will pay for my dishonor."

In accordance with local custom, the family of the unlucky girl chased her away. She found refuge in a wooded area where she bore a male child.

Ryangombe had gone out hunting when he suddenly met with the angered mother. She changed herself into a buffalo and pierced the king of the Imwanda with her horns.

The Banyarwanda like to ascribe to Ruganzu II most historical events and the origin of a number of practices and customs. What aspects of the afore-mentioned legend should we keep in mind? The interpretation of the facts is far from easy. The reign of Ruganzu II is relatively recent. On the other hand, the cult of Ryangombe is found in neighboring areas although the details vary. It is difficult to accept all the narrative details as historical. The religious society seems to /363/ date much farther back than the reign of this great monarch (1).

1. Ryangombe himself may have been only the perpetuator of these rites and may have practiced them by virtue of the law of succession, if it is assumed that he was a petty king (umuhinza), or on the authority of the Hamitic potentates.

774 776 The figures honored by the members of this secret society rank as demigods. Their protection is believed to be effective in the various circumstances of public and family life. As a result, their disciples appeal to them for the obtaining of any material benefit, recovery from illness, ownership of cattle, good relations with chiefs or neighbors, triumph over enemies, protection against bewitchers or spell casters, fecundity, etc.

[576] In order to reach these goals, the initiates respectfully come to the man who plays the role of Ryangombe, greet him, kneel at his feet, address his companions, and offer them gifts.

There is a traditional way to honor these spirits of varying rank and position. No rite is overlooked. Ceremonial dress, gestures, words, offerings, everything is foreseen and prescribed by immutable laws.

Each of the "patrons" has a peculiar costume and special insignias which the man who plays his role must perforce take into account. They are offered gifts of various kinds, and chants or "paeans" are sung, recalling to the spectators the brilliant deeds of their protectors.

1. Ryangombe is represented as seated on a native chair, with a cutlass suspended from his neck. One sets down at his side a [273] vessel full of lustral water and a large jar of pombe, beer made of sorghum or banana juice.

[198] The ladies who wish to honor him hold in their hands a household spatula (umwuko). His adepts imitate the call of the hyena to praise him (2). /364/

2. Is this a vestige of the ancient tribal totems? We cannot be sure.

2. Binego, son of Ryangombe, is called the "Liberator" because he saved his father from ruin and dishonor.

The man who plays his role holds a spear and stick and has a pipe (urwika in the language of the initiates) and a small gourd full of banana beer.

794 His peculiar cry of "a ba ba ba. . . , " pronounced in a virile tone,
776 recalls that Binego had great strength and invincible courage.

3. Mugasa is Ryangombe's son-in-law.

His adepts imitate him by flinging two goatskins over their body and by adopting as their peculiar insignia a household spatula holding a piece of sorghum bread. Mugasa had a weakness for sorghum bread and goat meat. To honor him his disciples adopt the same
customs and habits as their master. For some reason, they clink a
[301 necklace made of small pieces of dried wood which is usually strung
854] around the neck of children to amuse them or keep them from crying
(inkondo z' ibichuma).

His special cry is "yee yee ye. . . . "

4. Nyabirungu, son of Ryangombe, was a hunter.

[224 His impersonator rings a small bell (of the type strung around
231] the neck of dogs), symbol of the hunt, and cries "i i i. . . " to recall
534 that Nyabirungu would return satisfied from the forest with a large
provision of game.

5. Luhanga, son of Ryangombe.

He symbolizes filial love because he rescued his mother from poverty when she was abandoned by Ryangombe, built her a beautiful hut, and provided for her needs.

He is represented in the ceremonies with a milk container full of beer, perhaps in order to recall the happy mother who, thanks to him, no longer lacked anything.

6. Nyakiriro, son of Ryangombe.

7. Kagoro, like his brother Nyabirungu, loved to hunt, hence
[287] the dogs at his side. He had /365/ the habit of covering his head with
a piece of mpuzu, a fabric made of ficus bark, of drinking out of a
[415] hollowed half gourd fashioned for this purpose (uruho), and of using
[272] a twig (umutozo) to blend curdled milk properly before taking it.
Those who invoke him feel that they honor him by imitating him,
that is to say, by copying his gestures and deeds.

8. Muzana is represented as a slave girl in the ceremonies.

She is honored by the Batutsi, who represent her by the side of a cow who has never lost a calf (inka y' issugi), a churning gourd, and a small pat of rancid butter (isimbo y'amavuta).

794 776 9. Nkonjo, another enslaved servant girl, who was first to bring the sad news of Ryangombe's death.

She is offered a broom as a gift, the symbol of her work as a slave, and a small storage granary or some produce as a reminder that she was in charge of watching over the harvest and of attending to the household tasks.

10. Mashira.

The Banyarwanda, forgetful of their own history, regard him as Ryangombe's child. We have better reasons to believe that he was no other than the celebrated magician-petty king acknowleged as one of the most powerful sorcerers.

[791] [415] In ritual sessions, his representatives assume a majestic bearing and hold in their hand an iron spear made all of a piece (igihosho), which is a sorcerer's emblem symbolizing strength. His followers offer him an earthen pitcher of special design, with two openings and a drinking tube in each to permit the spectators to drink the hydromel it contains in honor of the magician.

His peculiar cry is "shi shi shi . . . . "

11. Mutwa, one of Ryangombe's companions, is invoked especially by the Batwa. /366/

[782] This figure seems to have been invented for the sake of the Batwa. He is offered gifts of beans, meat, milk, and sorghum bread which the members of this despised group share with delight.

The selection of these particular foods, which are offered first as a sacrifice to Mutwa, aims at pleasing him by satisfying his hunger. This is because the Negrillos, whose prototype (or ancestor) he portrays, do not always eat their fill, and these foods appeal to them as the ideal dishes they most desire.

New members were added later to this gallery of demigods. We shall mention only the best-known ones.

1. The Liberator Kibogo, son of King Ndahiro, is often invoked for rain.

[782] 2. The Bagoyi, lake-shore dwellers, offer libations of beer to Mwungeri, son of Nyankaka, who perished in the Lake Kivu disaster.

3. The inhabitants of the Bwana-Mkali honor in turn Rumana

794 and Mulengetwe, old historical figures who may have been notorious.

776 4. The "Munyoro" figure was invented for the same superstitious reasons which cause the Blacks to honor the spirits of the dead and more particularly the souls of those who distinguished themselves for good or for evil in the course of their mortal existence.

The figure of Munyoro was probably included in the ceremonies after the defeat of the Banyoro.

5. The inhabitants of the Nkombo isles render special worship to Muhima and Nyirangenge.

Muhima, a synonym for Mututsi, symbolizes the Batutsi conquerors who seized the isles, and Nyirangenge, a feminine figure, stands for the Batutsi ladies or personifies the intelligence of the Hamites.

6. Nyarwambari, son of Mulema and grandson /367/ of Ngwegwe, figures among Ryangombe's followers. The initiates do not have much to say about him.

7. Bukiranzuki figures among the daughters of the founder. During the ceremonies, the women who worship her wear on their heads the tail of an animal known under the name of igiharangu.

The members of this religious pantheon are numerous. They include, aside from the afore-mentioned figures, the founder's father and grandfather, Babinga and Nyundo; his wives, Kajumba, mother of Binego, Karyango, mother of Bukiranzuki, and Gachubya, mother of Nyabirungu; Nyirakabali, his daughter, whom he gave in marriage to one of his companions; and Lubindankima ("the man who girds his loins with a monkey pelt"). The inhabitants of the Bugoyi have it that this latter figure, who was probably invented out of whole cloth, was the friend and confidant of one of Ruganzu II's great victims, the famous Gatabirora, nicknamed Bilikunkomo, whose actions and deeds have been dramatized and romanticized (1).

1. Cf. Book III /not translated/.

In the meetings of the initiates there is also mention of

[825] Gassankomo, "the man who wraps himself in colobus pelts." This is the honorific name given to Kagoro, whose impersonator must for some

794 reason gather myriapods (centipedes) which he must dry in the sun and
796 then string up and wear as a badge when he goes begging for sorghum
[625] or banana bunches in the course of ritual processions.

The disciples of Ryangombe also honor the memory of the master's mother, whose role was rather insignificant to judge by the legend.

Ntamutimuchumyi is mentioned only to state that he was the cause of Ryangombe's first misfortunes, for he was about to dishonor him by depriving him of his property and his rights. He was eventually killed for the sake of the general /368/ welfare and honor by Binego, who arrived at the most critical moment. The name of Ntamutimuchunyi /sic/ is synonymous with felony and treachery.

As for Nkonjo, the slave, she personifies cowardice and coarseness. She is mentioned only with scorn (1).

(1) Cf. Book V, "The Legend of Ryangombe," /not translated/.

774 To designate the master's hunting dogs, initiates avail them-
552 selves of appellations and epithets replete with allusions. Some of them recall the abilities of these animals, others the qualities and defects of human beings. The names of the following animals are readily mentioned:

1. "The (serious) man who never laughs at his fellowman" (*Ntamugab' usek' undi*).
2. "He who preserves (as a careful owner) a store of smoked meat" (*Nyamubikan' umuranz' uruguma*).
3. "He who pays the bride price for a girl whose family did not raise her properly" (*Bakoska batahana*).
4. "The pot-herb which is so odorous, although it is not yet ripe, that it causes people to eat up (at one blow) all the butter in the house" (*Urunyegeri rutoto*).
5. "Her mother knows her well (including all her faults), so she will make no effort to argue with her because she knows that her daughter is incorrigible" (*Nyina aramuzi, ntazamumpora*).

794 6. "The dog that runs like the wind" (Nyakayaga).

552 7. "The dog with fringes (with long hair)" (Nyagayonga).

Among the prototypes or figures who appear in this legend,
173 Ryangombe is the one most highly honored.

794 He is regarded as a sort of hunter-king who made volcanoes his favoirte dwelling place after his death.

According to the same narrative, he still enjoys the pleasures of the hunt with his sons, companions, and favorites in those high mountainous and wooded regions. The Batutsi, Bahutu, and Batwa have participated in this cult in large numbers. They observe its /369/ rites faithfully and observe the rules of the arcana. The ceremonies take place mostly at night. Each of the adepts appeals to the spirit or spirits for whom he has a special devotion. The Batutsi have chosen those whose life most closely parallels their own.

The chiefs do not like to mix with their subjects to honor
643 those powerful spirits, but they seek out the help of the Bahutu and
794 Batwa who belong tothis cult and have them dance and sing in honor
of Ryangombe and his companions. The Bahutu and Batwa alone take
part in the ritual processions and collections which are carried out
through the villages in summertime.

794 The gestures of this cult are pervaded with earnest and impressive seriousness. Initiation, confirmation, ritual feasts, the taking on and carrying out of vows, the collections and processions, all take place secretly, away from prying eyes. Laymen are not allowed to come near the gatherings, and jests and insults directed at the initiates were seriously punished in the old times. A former queen, Nyiramulema (a wife of King Mutara), was crucified upon the ground in the courtyard of her dwelling by the imandwa for having ridiculed their ceremonies. The tomb of the unfortunate woman lies at Savé, in the Nyarigina quarter.

644 II. Official Posts of Great Importance from the Standpoint of the Crown (Ingoma) as well as from that of the Executive.

Generals and Official Drummers.

Executioners, Capital Punishment, and the "Pit" of the Bugessera.

701 1. The generals or commanders of the armed forces.

701 A general is called umugabe, an army corps umutwe, and an army on the march igitero, from the verb gutera, "to attack."

For the sake of documentation, here is a list of the names of the army corps, /370/ those of the regions where they are recruited, and the names of the born generals /généraux-nes/ who lead them.

Army Corps	Region	Generals
Ndala	Burwe	Lwasamanzi
Imvejuru	Bwana-Mkale	Chytatire
Nyaruguru	Buyenzi and Bungwe	Sebagangari
U Ruyange	Various regions	Lwabutogo
A-Bashumba	Part of the Bungwe	Kabera
Nyakale	Nyakale	Sezikeya
Impamakwicha	Busanza	Luharamanzi
Inzirabgoba	Buhanga	Lugerinyange
Abashakamba	Bwana-Chambge	Lwabusisi
Intaganzwa	Various regions	Nturo
Impara	Kinyaga	Lwakataraka
Issumo	Nduga, Lukiga	Rwidegembya
Abakembanyi	Bugarama	Gisazi
Abiru	Southwestern Kinyaga	Birassenyeri
Abakemba	Bugessera and Buganza	Mafene
Abahirika	Migongo	Muligo
Abarassa	Gihumya	Kanuma
Abadahigwa	Mirenge	Gashamura
Indengabanizi	Various regions	Mudukikwa
Abalima	Mututu	Gamakwandi
Abalito	Nduga and Buganza	Nyakassaza
Ndushabandi	Buganza and elsewhere	Lukarakamba
Abadahemuka	Gisseke	Machari
Imitari	Eastern Mayaga	Buzizi
Ibisiga	Mutara-Ndorwa	Zimulinda
Abashakamba	Bugoyi (Abagwabiro)	Lwangeyo
Abatalindwa	Bugoyi, Bgishaza	Bushako
Abakemba	"	Mugemanshuro

701 Abarangamyambi
Abangogo
Abatanyagwa
etc.

Bumbogo, Bussigi
Kingogo
Budaha
etc.

Gashamura
Luvuzandekwe
Lwamanywa (1)
etc.

1. The Batwa, like the Bahutu, are divided into several army corps. The four principal ones are the following: The army corps called Rwiririza, which includes the Batwa of Gihogwe, in the Nduga, beyond the Kayumbo River; the Biniga, which includes the Batwa of the Bwana-Mkalé and which has as its chiefs two Batwa, Senkobga and his son, Kanyamubare; Abagiga, or Batwa /371/ of the great chief Kayondo; and finally the Batwa soldiers called Impunyu. These are none other than the forest Negrillos who are commonly designated by the name of Impunyu, whose etymological meaning is "men of small stature," that is to say, Negrillos or Pygmies, of which the native word is an exact translation.

Such is the military regime that still prevails, although in purely theoretical fashion. /371/

Until 1900 most of the Hamitic kings had taken advantage of this system to such an extent that some clans are said to have been decimated as a result of the too numerous expeditions of ancient times.

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2. The provincial governors (Abatware b' intebbe), who are nearly always at court.

644 3. The petty independent chiefs (Abanyabikiugi), who owe
634 allegiance only to the king but who rule a small area in the province
641 of a great chief. It is rare for a provincial chief not to have in his territory one or several enclaves of this sort, whose rulers are appointed directly by the king. The latter does this to save a poor relative from misery or to reward a favorite. Whenever the opportunity arises, the lucky beneficiary will watch the actions of his colleague, the provincial governor, and denounce him to the king in order to gain the latter's approval.

644 4. The appointed keepers of the famous palladium drum
778 called Kalinga, over which a vigil is maintained day and night by a special team chosen from the Abiru clan.

[534] This drum has a long history, and the vicissitudes it entailed have given rise to many a narrative. The most important of these bears on the miraculous preservation of the drum and its unexpected discovery at the beginning of Ruganzu II's reign. It is believed that the drum was burned in 1896 at the time of the Runchunchu affair. Kabale, the instigator of the rebellion and an uncle of the new king, had a new one made identical with the first.

It is the great sacred drum, the badge of sovereignty and palladium of the realm. It is not habitually played. As a rule, it
[482] must follow the king on /372/ his journeys. It is carried in a hammock, and the other drums are played in its honor. It is entitled to the same respect as the king, and people clap their hands three times when they pass before it. In order to preserve it, one rubs it from time to time with butter and the blood of beeves whose entrails "turned white," that is to say, whose sacrifice was established as favorable by the sacrificer-diviners.

[727] The bloody spoils (ibikondo) of important enemies are fastened to the leather strips stretched over the sides of the instrument.

Most of those dismal trophies vanished in the Runchunchu fire, but the inhabitants of the capital cite with pride the names of the unhappy princes whose defeat and death are still inscribed in macabre fashion on the palladium-drum (1).

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1. They are among others Kanyoni, son of Gatibamenya, and Rubunda, princes of the Ndorwa area; Nyagaketchuru, the woman chief who governed part of Huyi in the Nyaruguru; Mutaga, the king of Urundi who was killed under the reign of Mutara I; Nyirabihoro, another princess from the neighborhood of Uswi; Kabego, king of the isle of Idjwi (in Lake Kivu), and his son Nkundiye.

644 778 [344] This drum is jealously guarded within the enclosure of the royal palace, on the east side in a hut called by the name of imilinga, that is to say, "copper objects."

This term is both metaphorical and euphemistic, and well understood by the people. It is metaphorical so as not to draw the attention of enemies upon the function of the hut, and it is also euphemistic so as to remind the courtiers of the importance of this palladium, which is likened thereby, to the copper threads and bracelets (formerly) regarded by the Banyarwanda as precious objects. The same hut serves as museum and repository. It also shelters the other royal drums which played a role in the past, before the Kalinga, in its stead, or along with it. /373/

[552] These drums bear characteristic names. Perhaps they should be regarded merely as symbols or trophies, reminders of victories won in the past by the Hamitic kings over the autochthonous princes. The latter's lands and drums went from their hands into those of the Batutsi monarchs.

The hut also encloses enormous quivers (imitana), arrows, spears, and other weapons of varied shapes and sizes. A certain element of taste must have presided over the selection of this booty, for people who have managed to see them say that the objects in the collection are almost invariably characterized by a certain richness, a great deal of originality, and fairly careful craftsmanship.

644 The observers add that most of those weapons and objects were once
778 the personal property of vanquished princes and kings, hence their
value in the eyes of the victors.

The Hamitic monarchs have also preserved carefully the skulls of beeves whose sacrifice was established as favorable, and the gourds containing the gall bladder (*igisabo*), the swollen parts of the large intestine (*ishira*), and certain other parts (*ibiranga*) of the immolated animals. Those hermetically sealed gourds make highly effective talismans.

534 The names of the main drums are as follows:
552 *Kalinga*, the palladium-drum.
644 *Chyimamugezi*, former palladium-drum of King Gihanga.
778 *Nyamigezi*, the palladium-drum of Yuhi-Mazimpaka.
Butare ("strong as a rock").
Gissabarwanda ("which reverberates throughout the land").
Sinkangimilyango, "I do not inspire fear into the (local) clans."
Mpatsibihugu, "I went to the defense of the land."
Kiragutse, "It spreads out" (that is to say, "It is of enormous size").

Ndamutsa, "I salute him (the king)," from the verb *kulamutsa*,
[202] /374/ "to salute," because it is pounded in the morning around nine
o'clock, when the king appears before his subjects to hear their good wishes and listen to their grievances. It was also used to herald executions of the convicted, a spectacle which formerly drew the interest of most of the court.

5. The official drummers are chosen, like the afore-mentioned
533 keepers, from the Abiru clan. They play on the Ndamutsa drum,
644 hence their title of *Abalamutsa*. They live in the hut consecrated
[614] to the late King Lwabugiri (he died in 1895). That is where the
ordinary drums are kept, those that are struck from four o'clock in the morning onward, in accordance with an immemorial custom.

644 6. The court chroniclers, or annalists. Their professional
name is *Abachurabgenge*, "knowledge makers." They form a sort of
814 closed clan whose members alternate by the king's side and acquaint
him with the history of the land and the deeds and actions of his

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forebears. Along with thedeeds of the past, they must preserve the memory of each king's name, the names of the queen mother, of the king's immediate ancestors, and of the tribe to which they belonged.

[787] Needless to say, critical sense has not yet appeared in the land. It happens sometimes that the Court historians and keepers of the traditions disagree about some detail which is now forgotten or in dispute. In such cases divinatory sacrifices are offered in order to find out what the king should be told (1).

1. See "Founding of the Hamitic Kingdom of Ruanda" /Book II, not translated/ for opinions regarding the authenticity of the first /few/ sovereigns. As fas as the beginnings of the kingdom are concerned, the traditional documentation is of greater value to ethnology than to history.

In spite of their inherent faults and imperfections, the epics nevertheless are not lacking in interest or charm. Through them we can grasp at first hand the thoughts of the Banyarwanda, their feelings, their /375/ ideas about life, their love of their native soil, their attachment to old customs and memories of the past. They reveal the pathetic sorrow caused by foreign invasions, and the enthusiasm inspired by eventual triumph.

[64] 7. The keepers of the traditions belong to the important Abiru clan. Their role is to preserve the unity and continuity of customs at the capital and throughout the realm. The supreme chief of this corporation is the chief of the Batsobe, whose position entails numerous and varied functions.

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In accordance with a popular tradition, he is personally entrusted with the task of collecting the umbilical cord (umukungwa) of each of the king's sons, as well as their teeth, including their milk teeth. Then, when the time comes to determine the heir to the throne, it is this personage who has the honor of presiding over the selection.

644 According to popular belief, this choice is made in a very interesting
643 manner. The umbilical cords of the young princes are buried separately
787 in pots of ficus wood (*umwuko*), with gourd, sorghum, eleusine,
and native spinach (*issogi*) seeds planted all around them (1). The future holder of the drum is pointed out by the most plentiful harvest. According to these naive people, the umbilical cords are /376/ then discarded except for that of the crown prince, which must be preserved (1).

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[824] 1. These seeds are designated by
the name of *mbuto nkuru*, that is
to say, "the major seeds." Eleusine
and sorghum play an important role
in the diet by yielding a sort of
native bread. Spinach is also
[252] highly valued because of the flavor
it lends to the beans with which
it is cooked. The Banyarwanda
also include in this category the
[415] seeds of a special gourd called
inzungwane, which is hollowed out
when ripe. It is used to store beer,
and it is this relationship to *pombe*,
so highly appreciated by the natives,
which lends so much importance to
the seed.

According to another popular belief, the successor to the throne is the one among the king's sons born with the "major seeds" in his right hand.

After subjugating the Bahutu by force, the Hamites insured their obedience by exploiting their credulity.

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1. In actual practice it is the king himself who designates his heir directly during his lifetime, or indirectly through executors, who make known the king's last will after his death.

When the throne was left vacant, there often ensued contests which gave rise to complications and bloody tragedies.

The Mututsi /Batutsi/ chief of the most powerful clan sometimes made his own choice among the sons of the dead king andfforced acceptance of his candidate. This happened in 1896, when Kabale rebelled against the rightful heir, Mibambge IV Rutalindwa, and had Yuhi IV Musinga, his own nephew and the present king, elected instead.

644 767 8. The royal corporation of undertakers called Abanyamugogo. Rightly or wrongly, they claim to be descendants of those who handled the funeral of Ruganzu II Ndori.

We shall mention them again in the section dealing with funeral rites.

644 681 696 9. Executioners.

They are usually chosen from among the Batwa.

So far as ordinary criminals are concerned, executions take place at the capital. High-ranking culprits are often placed in the custody of a chief, who leads them to the Buberuka or Bugessera provinces.

The unfortunate victims are strangled or smitten down with spears, and then tossed into the pit (urwobo) of Bayanga or into the shifting marsh of Nkonde. Aside from strangulation and drowning, 644 681 696 the Banyarwanda also practice dismemberment, otherwise known as the "torment of the hundred wounds."

First the flesh of the face, arms, calves, back, etc. are cut up in order to make the victim suffer as long as possible. This refinement of cruelty is carried out mainly in vendettas (guhora).

Impalement is reserved for cattle thieves. There is mention of an unfortunate man whose stake threatened to come out through his side. The operation was begun all over again..., but the patient /377/ died long before it was concluded. The most common torture for persons of medium rank consisted in cutting off their hands and feet and leaving them thus on the spot, where they died of cold if the hyenas did not devour them first. Sometimes death lingered for two or three days because the blood had coagulated and the hemorrhage had stopped.

Some of those unfortunate victims would bellow their torment and thirst, dragging themselves wretchedly on knees and elbows and vainly attempting to come near the huts and implore the pity of human beings. Their doleful cries were heard throughout the night.

[687] Fear suppressed pity, for the slightest act of compassion would have been regarded as high treason. Any show of pity or mercy was punishable by death. Execution by club, spear, or billhook blows and the cutting of the carotid artery were regarded as the mildest and quickest methods for victims entitled to a certain consideration. This category included elders, women, former favorites, and certain court employees. Important personages whom one did not wish to "do away with" (gusonga) were often sentenced to lose their eyes.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, hardly a week went by at the capital without a bloody execution. If several weeks elapsed without one, the fact seemed so extraordinary that the following expression was repeated everywhere, "Peace (or calm) reigns at the capital" (N' ubuhoro ibgami).

644 683 Sorcery was the cause of condemnation most frequently invoked. When people had an enemy and wished for revenge or when they coveted a rich man's possessions and wealth, no great effort of the imagination /378/ was needed on their part to prove the culpability of the man whose death they desired. When a man was led before

644 the king following such a denunciation, the sentence was swiftly
683 pronounced. "Nakukijije (You are pardoned), " said the king, if the accused had been so fortunate as to find powerful protectors or to refute peremptorily the accusations of his enemies. "Mumujane ku kivumu (Lead him to the ficus tree), " cried the king to the executioners when the man was condemned.

696 "Come on, we shall pardon you (guino twakukijije)," added the executioners derisively while leading away their prey. The unfortunate creature vainly implored the pity of the king and of the spectators, who just looked away. He was quickly led to a hollow
[152] near the ill-omened ficus tree (ikivumu), where he was to suffer the prescribed punishment under the eyes of the crowd, who loved to attend those dreadful spectacles (1). The moans, complaints, cries,
[541] and howls of the tormented victims did not stop the executioners from pursuing their deadly task to the end. The sufferings of the condemned persons in no way affected their sensibilities. "Has it been a long time since So-and-So was executed?" they were sometimes asked. "The hyenas have eaten him and even digested him (zamuliye, zamuneye), " they would answer coarsely without changing their tone.

Executioners were seen to prolong the victim's torment for their own gratification, or to lead them to run away by releasing them from their bonds so as to have the pleasure of finishing them on the run. We shall not elaborate on the disgraceful mutilations which those unfortunate individuals were first made to suffer.

686 Many a "rain maker" was killed because he could produce no rain. At times of great drought, those who had the misfortune /379/ of being caught were brought to court. They remained bound for days under the burning rays of the sun, while the populace hurled insults at them.

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1. Capital punishment drew large crowds filled with morbid curiosity and avid for cruel emotions.

686 "Why don't you make the sky weep if you wish to find a remedy for your suffering!" people would shout at them as a joke (1).

1. Izuba libaririre!

"If it does not rain at such-and-such a time, if you do not make our fields green again, you will die".... And execution followed close upon the threat.

635 692 Like the king, the great Batutsi chiefs sat in judgment and passed sentence in their provinces when they resided there or whenever they were passing through. They were not all alike. Among them there were just and humane men, and one likes to believe that they were in the majority. Some nevertheless left a bad reputation on account of their cruelty. 681 It is said that two of them took pleasure in having the arms of their victims bound behind their backs with wire drawn so tightly that the elbows met and the wire sank into the flesh.... Many persons died of this unique and atrocious torment. Another dignitary had those upon whom he wanted to wreak his revenge immobilized and made to lie on their backs.

Then he would make his victim drink a pitcher of beer or water through a gourd shaped like a funnel. A third man, leaning heavily on his spear, would pierce his victim's foot and thus nail him to the ground. A high dignitary punished those who had displeased him by seizing two of their fingers and pulling them apart with all his might, thus tearing the tissues that connected them. Fortunately, however, those were exceptions which should be ascribed to paganism, the primitiveness of customs, the cruelty of the times, the criminal procedures then in effect, the passions aroused by clan struggles, the competition for power, the revolutions, and sometimes also the proud and savage conceit of chiefs who were too young to govern. /380/

643 661 In order to gain an accurate understanding of the more that prevailed at the time, the reader must be reminded that the life of a man counted for very little in the eyes of the king and of the great chiefs. Subjects of Lwabugiri who are still alive today (he died in 1895) report that in order to show his skill or to judge the strength of his bow, the sovereign would shoot at the first person who appeared

643 661 along the road, to the sanctimonious applause of his entourage. Once he even tried his spear against one of his chief lieutenants. The latter had the audacity to evade the blow, pick up the weapon, and hurl it back at him with equal skill. The king managed to duck and showed no displeasure, at least on that day. He even congratulated the man for his boldness and courage and said that he was a "man" (umugabo).

This scene was enacted more than once during the same reign. The unfortunate men who served as targets to the spirited monarch, however, lacked sufficient audacity, and especially good fortune, to get away... with such amiable words.

[687] Under the reign of the present monarch, Yuhi IV Musinga, from the time of his accession to the throne and prior to European penetration, the famous Ndamutsa drum often heralded one or several executions. Aside from the crime of sorcery it was enough to be denounced, rightly or wrongly, as having spoken poorly of the king and queen mother. Such crimes were punished on short order and briskly.

Public rumor has it that the young king tried his first gun shot on a madman. He hit him point blank.

The courtiers who were present at this murder scene emitted frenzied bravos to applaud the supreme skill of His Majesty.

[177] European influence and supervision alone managed to bring to an end this state of affairs and this kind of behavior, which in the natives' way of thought only served to accentuate the majesty and power of the king. /381/ It does not follow that this change made the pagan Blacks any happier, for they were awed by the ancient customs and the bloody displays of brute force.

671 In principle, justice was the king's justice, since as the saying goes, "the king is the law." For the sake of truthfulness, however, it must be added that there is a set of laws in existence. It is certainly not a complete code, but it nevertheless includes a series of laws and practices adding up to a veritable common law which, had it been rigorously applied, would have avoided many an extortion and cruelty. Gradually, over the centuries, a special procedure had been established for litigations bearing on property rights, inheritance rights, matrimonial rights and bride price, physical damage such as

671 theft, arson, and destruction of crops caused to a neighbor, grazing
rights, the levying of taille /head tax/ and forced labor, etc. Culprits
[694] of high lineage and wealthy people often extricated themselves with
money and innocent people sometimes payed for offenders, especially
when false witnesses were suborned.

The Pit of the Bugessera

133 Among the various torture spots such as the swamp, called
823 Nkonde in the Buberuka, the Nshimbo swamp near Lukaza, the
681 Ruboneye swamp near Nyanza, the place called "Ficus-tree spot"
(ku Kivumu), certain rapids of the Akanyaru and Nyabarongo rivers,
696 etc., it was the pit of the Bugessera that left the most evil memory.
Its reputation is highly sinister, owing to the illustrious offenders who
were tossed into it and also to the legends that circulate about this
accursed place.

The pit is located in the Bugessera region, not far from one of Lwabugiri's ancient residences, which it is surprising to find in the middle of this deserted region.

The landscape is stark, even wild, and darkened by the memory of the tragic executions it witnessed. /382/

The pit is a sort of depression in a rocky area (ibuye ryasamye),
681 about three or four meters deep. It is more or less filled with stagnant
696 rain water according to the time of year, and it is half choked with
823 mud (1). Clumps of trees of various kinds make islets of greenery and

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1. The Blacks like to account for the peculiarities of rocks and boulders, whose shapes and cavities invite comparisons. They tend to attribute these formations to the influence of men or demigods. They gave the name of "Bayanga's little beer boat" (umuvule) to another depression located near the preceding one and which to their eyes had that appearance. All around

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the "little boat" there are cavities or small holes upon which the Mututsi Bayanga, according to the same tradition, placed the beer jars (ibiteleko by' ibibindi by' inzoga).

The torture spots sometimes borrowed their name from the first victim to be sacrificed there, such as Nkonde, Ruboneye, Nshimbo, etc.

break the monotony of that vast plain on which only herders and hunters roam.

Tradition adds that a Mututsi formerly lived not far from the pit and led his herds to water there.

His name, Bayanga, remained bound to the spot (urwobo rwa Bayanga). Cursed by some king whose name is now forgotten, the place was later deserted.

It seems, however, that the pit was not put to its new and tragic use until the reign of King Lwabugiri, who settled with his court in the middle of the Bugessera waste around 1886 or 1889 in order to be closer to the Urundi he hoped to conquer. The presence and proximity of the pit probably suggested to him the idea of tossing criminals and convicted political offenders into it. It was a short step from thought to deed. The first victims, at least those whose name has been preserved, date from the time of Lwabugiri's reign.

Since this is a remote place that inspires terror, it is known only to the executioners and to the few inhabitants of the Bugessera. Fancy took charge of this cursed place and wove fantastic tales about it which are naïvely believed by the populace. /383/

It is said that anyone who drinks of the water will die instantly. Even to wash one's hands in it or merely touch it would have the same result. It is said that a hunter who was a stranger to the land and who quenched his thirst at the pit contracted leprosy on the spot and died after horrible sufferings. This same water is said to be fatal

681 696 823 to birds and animals such as buffalo, gazelles, wild boars, dogs. Even if the latter should not die immediately, their masters would have to kill them for fear of being stricken themselves by contagion.

Each night, they say, smoke and flames rise from that awful place and cast a reddish glare on the horizon (1).

1. The grass fires at the end of summer must not be foreign to this association of thoughts and images.

It is also said that the waters have the color of blood (atukura, assa n'amarasso). Every time an offender is led to the pit, the waters rise suddenly as though to fetch the victim (ngw' abon' umugome, akassama). After swallowing their prey, the waters subside. Then protracted cries and moans (akaboroga, akater' induru) arise from the bottom of the pit.

The pit is so deep, it is commonly said, that its waters join those of Lake Kivu (ngw' aja hasi, afatanye n'i Kivu).

Considering such stories, one can easily understand why people should speak with terror of that cursed place.

681 696 In actual fact, the victims were strangled or killed with spears before they were thrown into the water.

An attempt was made to submerge the bodies, but they would rise once more to the surface. The hyenas quickly disposed of them. After leaving the place of torture, the executioners would go a certain distance to another depression, usually filled with water, in order to clean their weapons and wash their blood-stained hands. /384/

[848] [845] [847] [826] Traitors and enemies, bewitchers and ranking political prisoners were not the sole victims of the accursed pit. Among those condemned to die at that sinister spot were also freak babies (ibimara), unwed mothers (ibinyandaro), children born during the period of mourning held for their father (inda y'amabi) sometimes along with their mother, young girls whose breasts had not grown (impenebere) (1)..., and calves born in a "faulty" manner (ubufuti), such as those whose legs... came first.

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1. Girls who reached marriageable age with this physical peculiarity were formerly regarded as an evil and a threat to the land. The small development of their breasts was considered a crime. They were called the girls "with undeveloped breasts," impenebere, from the verb guhenebera, meaning "to be limited," "to be brought to nothing."

681 whose legs...came first.

696 Those beings, abnormal or regarded as such, were invariably condemned prior to European penetration. There was no pity for them. They had to be done away with secretly and at night, so as not to be denied passage through the land which had to be crossed. According to popular belief, the mere presence or accidental sojourn of one of those beings could unleash famine or other evils throughout the region.

Chapter 2

Duties of a Purely Utilitarian Nature

644 A. The employees of His Majesty's "Mouth" and "Cup" /departments/, that is to say, the cooks and domestic servants (Abahanga, "the Skillful Ones," and Abozi, "the Washers") have always been regarded as holding the least enviable position at court. The hut in which the servants keep the bowls of milk reserved for the king is /385/ designated by the name of kiryana, "the house that devours its inhabitants," since few are the men who survived their duties. After a varying length of service, they were suspected in almost every case of planning to poison the king, and they died a

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644 [682] violent death when they least expected it. This was for a long time a sword of Damocles which almost invariably fell upon the head of those who had the misfortune of being selected for that unenvied position. We shall cite, later on, a few examples of this.

644 273 651 B. The cupbearers (abanyanzoga), like their colleagues in the royal dairy and kitchen, also practiced a dangerous trade. Their duties involved the obtention of the best beer available, which they had to preserve and to offer at the moment it was desired. They were numerous, and some of them lived near the king while others roamed the land to requisition honey, beer itself, or the bunches of bananas which are used in the manufacture of this precious beverage (1).

1. The head of the cupbearers, a certain Mutagikwa, is regarded thereby as captain of the Indengabaganizi army corps. This is a strictly honorific title, which nevertheless enables him to levy taxes in those territories where he exercises his functions as an officer of the "Cup."

He lives at Nyarugenge in Gassagara, the Buhanga.

[661] Originally, employees in this category theoretically had rights only to bunches of bananas and honey (imitsama), and they roamed the land to obtain them (gutorana). Gradually they took on the habit of behaving like true chiefs and of demanding from the inhabitants contributions in kind, beans, sorghum, cows, etc., as well as forced labor, called buletwa. This permitted them not only to live well, but also to acquire large herds.

644 276 C. There are several work groups assigned to the cultivation and preparation of the tobacco which is used by the prince. The plants destined for his use come from the Bugoyi /386/ Mata in the Marangara, and Ruyanza and Mussambiro in the Nduga, among other

644 regions. The leaves are prepared at the capital by special employees,
276 men or women, who also risked their lives occasionally for the reasons cited above.

D. The preparation of tobacco juice, which is used for a most unusual and worldly purpose (mukibuno), is entrusted to a group of female servants or young girls in the service of the queen mother. The tobacco leaves are immersed in a liquid of tart and bitter flavor (inkari), in which they are allowed to remain for some time.

The liquid alone is then used by the queen mother and high-
[278] ranking ladies, who believe that tobacco juice, when prepared in this fashion, is an infallible remedy against the ailment known locally under the name of imisuzi.

This strongly scented solution bears the name of a plant with a pungent odor (umugabagaba) from which the odalisks in charge of this work also draw their name, abanyamugabagaba. The rooms where this curious medication is applied are known at court and among the great chiefs who are all familiar with the famous recipe by special names whose meaning is clear only to those in the know. They are the imikinga, or "secret cabinets," (from gukinga, "to close") and ubugonyi, "public toilets."

E. A group of factotums known as Abanyakambere remain at
644 the disposal of the sovereign, who spends most of his day in the hut called by the name of Ikambere, "the first one," because it stands at the heart of the main courtyard. The function of these valets is to watch over the various objects which make up the room furnishings. They also carry out the king's orders and relay messages to the other
[202] servants. /387/

F. There are also the keepers of the treasure. They are
644 called Abanya-byuma.

556 The Banyarwanda designate all iron objects by the word byuma. Billhooks, axes, graters, knives, bracelets, and especially hoes represent wealth to their owners in terms of their numbers and actual value.

This manner of conceiving and understanding riches gave the keepers of the treasure the name of "people entrusted with the preservation of iron objects (abanya-byuma)." The treasure itself

644 556 bears the meaningful name of *intore*, from the verb *gutora*, "to choose," because it contains a selection of unique pieces. It includes the wardrobe (*imyambar' abami*) of the former kings and their jewels. Fabrics of all kinds; colobus hides, beads, necklaces, braceletd, and other objects of this sort make up the greater part of the treasure proper, which is exhibited twice a year, as we shall see later on when we discuss the festivals at Court.

644 356 G. A group of young girls is in charge of cleaning the hut which the monarch uses as a bedroom. They are entrusted with the task of renewing the fine grass which makes up the royal bed and of stretching upon it the mats and precious furs (*ibyahi*), that is to say, the otter, lion, and leopard hides on which the sovereign lies. Those chambermaids are popularly called *Abashahsi*, "those who stretch out the mats," from the word *gusasa*, "to stretch out the mats." Another of their functions, and not the least important one, consists of "warming" the royal bed every night. In order to achieve this, they lie down on the couch successively or even all together until the king arrives.

The women or girls who fulfill a function at court live under the ultimate supervision of the queen mother, at whose side they live. /388/

644 701 H. The "Irresistibles" (*Intalindwa*) take their name from the army corps of that name. They include a group of servants and factotums chosen among the various classes of society. Among other duties, they watch over the king and his children at night and keep up the fire that must burn on the hearth throughout the night, according to a custom of the country which is also observed by the great chiefs. They renovate the huts by rebuilding them regularly every three years. Since the huts which make up the royal palace are numerous, they share this task with the chiefs of certain provinces.

[482] It is from among the "Irresistibles" that hammock bearers (*abahetsi b' ingobyi*) are selected when great ladies of the royal harem venture outside. They belong to the army corps whose name they bear. The members of this military group were regarded as the most courageous (*Intalindwa*, "those who cannot be resisted").

644 They[1] were sometimes employed, in preference to other servants, to
701 lead away the convicted high-ranking offenders who were to be exe-
[681] cuted at the usual places of punishment (Buberuka, Bugessera).

I. The name of *Impara* is used to designate another army corps which is recruited from among the inhabitants of Kinyaga provinces. This name was also given by extension to a group of individuals who are initiates of the Ryangombe secret society and who are compelled thereby to live close to the king in order to draw upon him the favors of the shades of all those who once belonged to that religious society.

They must make an appearance when the king rises, bearing
on their heads the tails of hares (*amashira y'. inkwavu*) or of some
other carnivore /sic/ like the marten (*ibiharangu*), which they shake
[769] to the right and to the left while singing and dancing. They hold in
the hand small bells or sistra (*ibinyuguri*), which they ring while /389/
invoking in a loud voice the protection of Ryangombe and his com-
panions. Aside from this beseeching role, they fulfill other functions
within the king's household.

Owing to their functions as suppliants and intercessors, which is their chief role by far, they might just as correctly have been included in the category that follows.

Duties of a Supposedly Utilitarian Nature, Some of Which Are Private and Others Public and National.

Sorcerers and Diviners of All Kinds.

A. The Bakoma clan has already been discussed at some
644 length in "History of a Reign, " /Book III, not translated/. They were
791 direct descendants of the autochthonous petty kings of Marangara land
and were formerly regarded, along with Mashira, as powerful sorcerers.
It was believed that they could preserve or take life by hidden
means known to them alone.

The first of those autochthonous princes, whose real name was
Sekibakanyi, had a tremendous reputation. It is still said today that
"Nkoma Sekibakanyi, king of Marangara, (son) of Nkondogoro, knew
[539] how to cast spells a great deal better than those things are done today"
(*Nkoma ya Nkondogoro ikilozi cho mu Marangara kitaloger' ubussa nk' aba none!*). This phrase is now proverbial.

[1] [i.e., the *Intalindwa*. -Analyst]

644 791 278 On account of this fame,[a] the Bakoma have been entrusted with the pre[illegible]tion of an elixir to prolong life called *issubyo* from the name of the plant which they use for this purpose, hence their name *Abanyissubyo*, "people of the life beverage," a name and function which they regard as a great honor. In order to make their elixir, the Bakoma, or people from Nkoma's land, look deep into the forest for a kind of moss or mould (*urugombyi*) which is found on trees. When they have a good amount of it they /390/ burn it all. The ashes are carefully gathered and stored in a safe place. They also use the roots of the plant called *issubyo*, which they dry in the sun and crush to powder on their flour mill.

The third ingredient of this water of youth is a kind of Lycoperdon called *agatumura* which resembles the puffball.

Small amounts of these ashes and powders are mixed with beer and handed daily to the king by two representatives of the ancient family. The Hamitic monarch sucks in a few drops through a drinking tube (*umuseke* or *umuheha*), rinses his mouth with them once, and immediately spits out the liquid.

[466] 644 791 767 In principle the members of the Bakoma clan are exempt from forced labor and have retained a fair amount of independence (1).

> 1. Over these last few years, the Hamitic chief who was placed above them had to concern himself only with the observance of European laws and ordinances.

They have no function other than to take turns at court and hand to the monarch the invigorating beverage of which they are the inventors (2).

> 2. Along with the Basozo, the Bakoma have enjoyed privileges and immunities for the longest period of time. In the "Reign of

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[a] [i.e., of being descended from the best sorceror. —Analyst]

644 Ruganzu II, " /Book III, not
791 translated/, we spoke at some
767 length of the Basozo and the
origin of the privileges they
still enjoy.

The royal corporation of undertakers has similar prerogatives.

791 644 B. The sorcerers of the divining and sacrificing kind who are employed at court or personally by the king may be said to form the most important and most numerous group. The king requests their services both on a private and on a public and national basis. Their titles and duties are infinitely varied. They are recruited from numerous clans. The Bega tribe provides the most celebrated sacrificer-diviners, known under the name /391/ of *Abakongori* or *Abanyambuto*. The *Abachumbi* group, who aside from their role as diviners have the power of setting spirits to flight, are drawn from among the Basinga. So are the *Abosha*, who claim to be direct descendants of the great sorcerer Lunukamishyo, that is to say, "the man with the sorcerer's knives, " who came from the land of Ndorwa. It has already been said that he came to seek his fortune in Ruanda, where he was well received by the Hamitic princes, who raised his family to noble rank and showered it with material goods. The name of the forebear, as preserved in history, derives from two words, *kunuka*, "to feel, " and *imishyo*, "knives, " because of the habit he had of using his sacrificer-diviner's knife to take his bearings.

Also included in the category of sorcerers of the divining and sacrificing kind are the *Abanyantondwe*, *Abanyakarago*, *Bihungamutwe*, *Abanyanzuzi*, who are the most common, and many others.

Rev. Fr. Arnoux has discussed them at some length in his work (1).

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1. "La Divination au Rwanda /Divination in Ruanda/, " *Anthropos*, 1918. In this study

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the author discusses diviners, including the Bakongori, and the various methods of practicing their art.

The same individual is both diviner and sacrificer.

[826] The Abakongori are also designated by the name of Abanyambuto because they use the saliva of their clients in their method of divination, hence the name mbuto given to this viscous fluid in this particular case.

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Numerous are the clans, such as the Bazigaba, Batembe, and Bahigo, of the Muhutu /Bantu/ race, which provide the court with diviners and sacrificers, but more numerous still are the families where these functions have been transmitted, since more or less distant times, from father to son or from mother to daughter.

The Bahigo and Batembe inhabit the Bugoyi region. The ancestors of these two families emigrated to the /Ruanda/ kingdom around the year 1800, during the reign of Yuhi III Gahindiro. The members of these two /392/ groups owed their good fortune to a Mututsi /Batutsi/ chief who was pleased with their divinatory talents and made them known to the court of King Yuhi III Gahindiro, where they were summoned (1).

1. The events and incidents of this emigration to Ruanda were preserved by his descendants and make an interesting tale.

787 Their method of divination differs from that of other diviners.

They are called Abanyamihundwa, that is to say, "jawbone diviners," because instead of using any small bones as do the ordinary Banyanzuzi, they use only the jawbones of sheep, beeves, and antelopes (2).

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2. The bones of goats are excluded from their divinatory practices.

To those small bones (imihundwa y' urwasaya), which must be six in number, they add three small pieces of iron (imbaba), three seeds of the gourd called inzungwane, and a piece of wood about ten centimeters long adorned with beads at one end and on one side, which is called igichumbi.

The diviners ascribe great importance to it /the last?/ and place it in the center of the jawbones, three to the right and three to the left, in order to consult the future. Another detail distinguishes them from their colleagues. While the latter throw their magic dice onto the plate (impinga) with an abrupt gesture, the Banyamihundwa simply allow theirs to fall upon the hide of one of the above-named animals.

Small bones play an important role at court and throughout the land. They are resorted to for everyday events. The bone thrower's role is to interpret the relative positions of the bones in accordance with his special knowledge. The number of dice or bones varies with the rank or title of the diviner. Each of the dice and bones has a significance of its own, which is modified in turn according to the manner in which they fall to the ground.... One must take into account the side upon which the bones fall, the direction in which they /393/ are pointing, and the position they assume in relation to each other. It is easy to imagine how many combinations are possible when all those elements are taken into account....

If the desired answer is not obtained at the first throw, one begins again....once, twice, ten times...until it comes (Levy-Bruhl) (1).

1. La Mentalité primitive /Primitive Mentality/, Félix Alcan Publ., 1922.

644 791 C. Aside from the haruspices, diviners, and sacrificers we have just mentioned, the king retains appointed representatives of every possible and imaginable kind of sorcery.

A whole crowd of sorcerers toils for the monarch and his court: necromancers (Abashyitsi or abahamagazi), conjurer-magicians (Abahuzi), makers of philters and charms (abanyanzaratsi), makers of amulets (abachunyi), etc.

Strangers who came from Bunyabungu or Buhunde (regions located to the north and west of Lake Kivu), from Uswi or Ujinja (on the shores of /Lake/ Victoria), etc., are no less popular than their autochthonous colleagues and sometimes surpass them in the novelty or originality of their art.

There was even once a dispensary for charms and poisons (ubulozi, plural amarozi or ibirozi) which one requisitioned from afar or attempted to make on the spot, although it appears that these experiments met with little success.

The plants whose juice, bark, or leaves were used were not among the most poisonous, as we shall see later.

We may add that the reputation of these magicians seems to have been more impressive than their deeds or the consequences of those deeds.

In all justice one must except from this statement the conjurer-644 756 791 magicians called abahuzi, whose crimes /394/ and misdeeds are too numerous to list (1). It is difficult to understand how they managed to exploit public credulity with impunity through so many centuries. The popular expression "to have blood on one's hands" may be fully

(1) "To seek" is guhura in Kinyarwanda, hence the word umuhuzi, "seeker, " given to this fearsome group of sorcerers. Guhurish' ihembe means "to seek with the horn, " and guhurish' umunwa, "to seek with the mouth" (in the patient's body).

644 applied to them. They are said to have the power of identifying
756 spell casters and bewitchers and also of expelling from the patient's
791 body whatever is claimed to have caused the illness, poisoning, or
bewitchment.

The remove the source of evil with a small horn or a gourd
[755] in the guise of a cupping glass, or even with their own mouth, and
produce before the bedazzled spectators bones, pebbles, toads, snake heads, and other incredible objects removed with the instrument. The Banyarwanda have boundless faith in the effectiveness of this method and tell of marvelous cures obtained in this fashion.

It is no use trying to reason with them about this. The elders are especially intractable.

In order to unmask the jettatori /from Italian/ and other such
791 cronies, our miracle workers (abahuzi) use another horn full of
incongruous and even unmentionable things.

Popular belief adds that they set out in the nude, horn in hand. The horn moves and twists about, people say, as if possessed
by an invisible spirit. It leads to the alleged spell casters and be-
[683] witchers, who were killed on the spot without furthur ceremony prior
to the arrival of the Europeans.

The naïve Blacks add that ingredients used to bewitch or to produce a spell /395/ were discovered in the same manner, no matter whether they had been buried or hidden in a hut (1).

1. The case is cited of several individuals in whose possession a collection of bones was found, and who confessed of their own accord that they were spell casters and bewitchers. It is possible that those unfortunate people, having fallen prey to autosuggestion, believed in the effectiveness of their baleful activities.

791 789 Those same "seekers," in their capacity as conjurer-magicians have the power of staving off the results of spells and sorcery. For a fee, they will set physical and moral boundaries to the evil powers of other sorcerers. They do this by means of medicines (*imiti*) of their own creation, amulets (*impigi*), and tree branches with magical properties, which they bury or stick into the ground. Areas thus "closed" to the evil of spells remain for a long time inviolable havens. Henceforth, the owners of such immunized grounds have nothing to fear from bewitchers.

791 The Banyarwanda talk a great deal, by the hearth, about those conjurer-magicians and their high deeds.

In order to recover stolen objects, the Banyarwanda resort to the Banyerango (2). These do not inspire the same fear as their aforementioned colleagues, although they use the same magic horn. The [842] *Bachunyi*, or makers of grigris, chiefly specialize in bringing fertility to sterile women.

For a fee they sell amulets and magic beverages. Gossipers add that charlatans in this category often take advantage of their clients while the naïve husband, a small bell in hand, is sent to take a slow walk around the sorcerer's hut.

754 D. The curser-sorcerers (*Abahenyi*) are also held in high esteem. Their mission, like that of the false prophet Balaam, /396/ is to curse the foes and annihilate their power to resist. Their chief, [644] named Agakwande, enjoys high regard at court. His ancestors were simple Bahutu. It was on account of their important functions that they gradually made their way into the noble caste of the Batutsi, with whom they continually intermarried. They inhabit the Ndiza, at Bulembo, and form a powerful and formidable body. Their

2. *Abanyerango*. This substantive is derived from the word *kulangira*, meaning "to show," "to uncover," and designates the sorcerer's trade. Hence the name *irango* given to the horn which he uses in his search.

754 incantations are claimed to be highly effective. When they practice their magic, they gather at night in a small grove which is their habitual spot and which bears the name of ihinero, from the word guhena, "to curse" (1).

> 1. The etymological and precise meaning of the verb guhena is stronger than the one just stated. It designates a symbolic and expressive gesture which serves to show the low regard in which a person is held or the contempt manifested toward him. The curser-magicians also turn the back on the foe while fulfilling their functions, hence the name of their profession.

On this occasion a black goat is killed and its pelt hung onto a bush.

They wear the fruits of a spiny bush (intobo) around the neck and sow charms on the path which the enemy is about to follow. They did this when the first Europeans arrived but met with little success.

644 701 E. We have already mentioned the generals (abagabe) among high court dignitaries. Above them stands another important figure, who might be called the commander (Umugaba). He plays the role of a sort of honorary general-in-chief of a superstitious character who is believed to make the troops successful. As a distinctive badge of his superiority over the actual general, he encircles his forehead with a strap (ikamba), which is somewhat reminiscent of the royal crown. He is chosen by the diviners (yarelejwe) and perhaps taken from among the Bahutu.

Most often, nevertheless, the role was filled by one of the Batutsi, sons or relatives of the king. It was thus that Karara followed his /397/ father, King Lwabugiri, to the Bunyabungu in the capacity

644 701 [302] of a good-luck general. During the Ishangi expedition it was another son of Lwabugiri, Nshozamihigo, who filled this role. These generals wear amulets around the neck and paint the face with white chalk or lustral water (amazi y'ingwa).

They are also the holders of charms and other talismans (inzaratsi, insinzi), which are supposed to help bring about the defeat of the enemy. They remain at camp while the troops fight. They are graced with almost royal honors. The drums sound reveille for them (akabikirwa) as they do for the king. They have full power to [692] make laws and settle differences, and their sentences cannot be appealed (ikyo bavuze ntikisubir' inyuma) (1).

Other Duties Similar in Nature to the Preceding.
Spell Casters and Bewitchers.
Purifiers and Exorcisers of All Sorts. Makers of Test Poison.

791 644 The duties of these men are practically everyday affairs and thus rather well known, and their works are as famous as those of their colleagues the sacrificer-diviners, the conjurer-magicians, etc.

1. Umugaba is a noun derived from the verb kugaba, meaning "to distribute" or "to give free of charge." In principle this term applies only to the king. Its synonym Rugaba, which stems from the same verb, is reserved for God (Imana).

When the king chooses someone other than the general-in-chief called umugabe to take his place at the head of his troops, he grants this man extensive powers and honors appropriate to his rank as a result of this title.

791 644 We mention them here separately because of the relatively numerous details cited about each one of them.

It must be said that all those "doctors of occult, mystic, and magic sciences," far from being ashamed of their trade, pride themselves in it and regard themselves as /398/ important and needed beings. They are conscious of their dignity and of the nobility of their functions, which they publicly advertise (1). For some of them professional remuneration is quite high. Glory brings profit.

In their pride and vanity the professional practitioners of magic and sorcery of all kinds have tried to give their art a noble [173] origin by tracing it back to the great king Ruganzu II. According to legend, he was the man who invented and organized everything.

Craftsmen, blacksmiths, and cultivators claim him /as their forebear/.

When pressed to account for their powers and with their backs against the wall, theurgic sorcerers, medicine men, etc., have claimed in turn to be merely trustees of the gifts and talents which the illustrious monarch was the first to hold and possess. He passed on those gifts and talents to their predecessors, whose line they carry on.

After subjugating the petty autochthonous princes who had governed Ruanda, the Hamitic kings used the services of those princes' descendants. Some of these petty kings, such as those of Marangara and the Bgishaza, had the reputation of being the most powerful of

[754] 1. This does not concern those who act on their own account and become bewitchers or spell casters on an occasional and temporary basis.

Such people operate in a hidden and roundabout way in order to exercise a purely personal vengeance. They take every possible precaution to conceal their operations, therefore, for they risk death if their deeds are disclosed.

644 sorcerers and of possessing exceptional talents. This is why the purely
791 mystical functions of their successors were sanctioned by the conquerors.

As a result, they remain on duty both to His Black Majesty and to his faithful subjects at court, at the capital, and throughout the realm. /399/

A. Bewitchers, spell casters, spells, and sorcery. The sorcerers in this category are subdivided into several groups and operate in various ways.

They are referred to as a group by the generic term umulôzi (abalôzi in the plural), "bewitcher." Kuloga means "to bewitch, to cast a spell," and also "to poison." Ubulôzi (amalôzi in the plural) means "bewitchment," "evil spell," "sorcery," and "poisoning." Those are familiar words in the great lake region.

As we shall see later, many of them ply their trade publicly both at the capital in the service of the king, to deliver him from his enemies, and in the villages where they serve their fellow men.

Others, whose activities are more or less acknowledged, practice only in secret.

Some, as will be made clear, have only a fictional existence and exist only in the imagination of naïve people.

1. Abashitsi, or "the catchers," is the name of those who
787 can force a thief to reveal himself through magical practices.

695 The name of their function is borrowed from the verb gushika, "to catch" (the thief), hence the word "urushiko" to designate the procedure. To do this the magician fills a vessel (imbehe) with a liquid which he prepares himself. He blows for a while into a drinking tube, one end of which is immersed in a wooden jar, until the froth (urufuro) overflows, forcing the thief through this mystic and symbolic procedure to reveal his deed in spite of himself. Such, at least, is the popular belief.

791 2. Abaheretsi (from the verb guhereka, "to lay traps through
bewitchment") serves to designate a secohd group of sorcerers who
789 specialize in burying charms and amulets of their own making in
banana groves and cultivated fields, /400/ hence the name of
uruhereko given to their sorcery.

789 Woe to those who plunder lands which have been thus bewitched!
241 They are struck motionless on the spot and become completely paralyzed (baragangara) and incapable of any motion. The sorcerer alone can free them by uttering some cabalistic words. In order to safeguard his crops the owner of a field often uses the following method, which consists of laying down on the field which is to be protected the sharpening stone, a handful of ashes from the hearth, and strips of leather taken from an old drum. If a sorghum crop is involved, our man ties together four sorghum stems near the mystic assortment, as though to simulate a hut consecrated to the spirits. The trespasser who chances on the property will be immobilized, or he will catch an illness that will lead him to the grave (1).

1. We are talking as from the native's mouth, but we do not intend to confirm his claims in any way. Even when events justify those claims, this may undoubtedly be ascribed to emotion, autosuggestion, or sheer coincidence.

791 In the Bwana-Mkali province, operators of this kind bear the
789 name of Abakagizi (from gukagira, "to hinder"), and their method is called urukago, "hindrance." Like their other colleagues, they bury amulets, plants with magic properties, an old household spatula, or even the small stone used to crush the grain at the entrance to the courtyard or behind the hut. The stone, called ingasire, is also called ikinane in sorcerers' terms, that is to say, "the obstacle," "the supreme preventitive." The use of a spatula which is worn or out of commission has a mystic sense and a magic virtue at the same time. The thief who should attempt to enter a dwelling protected in this fashion would find his efforts come to naught (2). Professional

2. This method is reminiscent of bewitchment by analogy /sympathetic magic/.

791 /practitioners/ of this kind demand rather high fees /401/ and will
789 accept no less than a goat, an ox, or even a heifer as the price of
their services.

3. In the Gissaka people believe that there are tame snakes
[825] guarding the fields and houses of their masters. Those reptiles coil
themselves around the neck of thieves and suffocate them. They
also follow the tracks of thieves and receivers of stolen goods to their
homes.

4. According to popular belief, the batezi (from the verb gutega, "to lay traps") are capable of uncovering evildoers and thieves by means of a curious method, which is none other than bewitchment by analogy /sympathetic magic/. The victim of the theft comes to the spell caster and presents him with a goat whose throat is immediately slit. Then the magician takes the bladder, fills it with air, and suspends it with a rope from the ceiling of the hut. If the thief's death is desired, the sorcerer punctures the bladder or even cuts the rope that holds it. If the membranous sac collapses on the ground, the thief cannot fail to die instantly. It will be sufficient to ask for news in the vicinity. Any sudden death will be interpreted in this light and ascribed to the act of bewitchment. The belly of the victim will be greatly inflated. This is what is called gubang' agaheto, "to string a bow, " as the Banyarwanda sometimes put it when they wish to allude to this method of bewitching.

If the owner of the stolen object wishes to be magnanimous, he asks the sorcerer to strike the bladder only lightly, in order to cause the culprit mere intestinal pains. Needless to say, the Blacks have complete faith in these magic procedures and believe that they have witnessed their consequences in a large number of cases.

754 5. Abachuraguzi. This word comes from the word guchuragura
and designates a kind of dance. /402/ The devotees of this kind of
[535] dance stamp up and down on the spot. People in this category are
the true jettatori /from Italian/ whose aim is to cast a spell, jettatura,
on their fellow men because they are jealous of their good fortune
or because they want revenge fro an offense, real or fancied. Those
baleful men operate at night. In order to succeed better in their
black designs, the spell casters must wear nothing but an old mat

754 which is no longer usable (umûsâmbi). Then they fetch a human tibia
or fibula (umurundi) with which they carry out a gruesome dance
[826] (guchuragura) in the courtyard of the person they wish to harm. They
hold in their hand a small jar full of live coals to symbolize the life
of their enemy which is soon to burn out. After breaking the clay jar
and scattering the coals, they toss a handful of earth taken from a
grave upon the owner's hut and say the following words in a low voice,
[539] "I don't want your beans but your life" (Sinshak' ibishyimbo, ichyo
ndashaka n'amagara yawe). This is reputed to be one of the worst
evil spells.

6. Gutambikir' umutambikiro, that is to say, "to dig a small
ditch across" the path where the hated enemy they wish to bewitch
will pass. This is another kind of spell by analogy /sympathetic
[826] magic/. In order to do this, the operator must if possible procure a
nerve taken from a human cadaver, and a strip of bamboo or some
other wood that was used in transporting the dead.

With these he makes a tiny bow which he places in the ditch dug out on the path of his enemy, who is soon to come by. The hole is covered with earth and grass so as not to arouse anyone's suspicion. When the detested person puts his foot on the concealed bow, the spell caster, hidden in the surrounding bushes, pronounces in a low voice the fateful word, Fatwa, "Be caught." This is the end of the unlucky traveler. /403/ Assailed with violent intestinal pains, distended, blown up, he will soon die in terrible agonies, or so claims the theory.

This procedure is also designated under the name of kubang' agaheto or guteg' umuntu agaheto, "to lay the bow trap."

7. Guteger' umuntu inkoko, "to practice the chick spell"
754 (implicitly, one whose guts did not turn white, iteze neza, yabay'
787 urutunda) is regarded along with guchuragura as one of the worst evil
spells.

In order to make use of this spell, one usually resorts to
specialists in divination who are past masters of this art. If the diviner
[826] agrees to do the job, for a handsome fee, his client prepares to
collect secretly (since the Blacks are suspicious and mistrustful of
their fellow men) a little saliva expectorated by the person on whom

754 he wishes to take revenge. The viscous material, carefully gathered
787 in a leaf, is brought to the sorcerer who introduces it with a little
[826] water into the beak of the chick he is about to sacrifice.

The diviner first holds a conversation with the bird and requests it to make sure that its guts will not "turn white" but "turn black," so the evil deriving from this fact may be duly utilized. After talking at some length, the operator slits the chicken's throat in the usual fashion of diviners and carefully washes the guts to verify the specific color (white or black) on which the spell depends. If black is present, the lucky client takes what is left of the chick from the hands of the diviner and tosses it surreptitiously into the hut or enclosure of his enemy, or else he buries it at the favorite spot where the person likes to sit and rest. The effects of the sorcery will be felt quickly, and the unfortunate victim /404/ will die almost instantly after a few moments of indisposition.

The Blacks add that this sorcery is feared by everyone but used more especially by the nobility (Batutsi). They say that if one wishes to ensure success, it is preferable to use a chick which is the only survivor (yonyine, ikinege) of its brood.

If the guts turn black in the course of the divinatory procedure, the chick will infallibly "swallow" (gusama) and "destroy" (gufata) the person whose death is desiired.

754 8. Let us now mention the bewitcher who uses the horn of a cow to cast an evil spell on an enemy (ihembe umulozi alogesha).

The horn is hollowed out by the sorcerer, who carves at its tip the head of a snake. He fills it with all sorts of objects and ingredients, the droppings of various birds or animals, and scraps of flesh taken from victims he has already killed.

9. Freak babies (ibimara), young girls whose breasts have not
[787 developed (impenebere), and other unfortunate beings of this kind are
845] regarded by the Banyarwanda as "revealing in themselves the presence
856] of an evil principle or mystic force whose influence is deadly." (1)
just like the monstra, portenta, and other ill omens of Roman times

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1. La mentalité primitive
/The Primitive Mentality/,
by Levy-Bruhl, pp. 158 ff.

754 just like the *monstra*, *portenta*, and other ill omens of Roman times.

In order to check an enemy invasion, the Banyarwanda formerly had the habit of leaving those abnormal beings to the blows of the invaders. The shedding of this blood, or even the mere presence of such individuals, was regarded as a curse.

It would be impossible to enumerate all the various methods of bewitchment and spell casting. The imagination of the Blacks is disproportionately fertile in this respect. The wealth of methods will [538] be /405/ appreciated when we recount the famous "Banyoro Invasion" tale, which has now become a traditional epic poem. Numerous incantations and much sorcery are mentioned in this narrative, and the eventual defeat of the invaders is ascribed to them.

754 842 10. Aglet knotters. It is rather surprising to find that the Blacks, too, believe in the evil influence of people to whom this kind of misdeed is ascribed.

Activities of this sort are called in the native language *kumanikir' undi ngw'atabyara*, "to tie up or check fecundity, " or again, *kubang' ingata*, "to braid a grass pad. "

As the etymological meaning of these words indicates, the grass knotters attempt to procure from the household of the people they wish to injure a handful of grass of the kind (*ishinge*) which is strewn upon the floor of the hut.

With it they braid a sort of pad (*ingata*), which is then hidden and hung in the hut.

So long as the grass remains knotted (in the pad), the mistress of the household cannot hope to become a mother.

Many young women ascribe their sterility to this /form of/ sorcery.

A handful of hair taken from a neighboring woman and braided [826] in the shape of a crown will have the same result. This is called *kumuzingirahw'amasunzu*, "to coil someone's hair. "

The natives claim that it would also suffice for the ill-disposed to get hold of one of the vegetable-fiber rings which ladies or women of rank wear on their legs, and crumple it in their hands, for the unfortunate woman to become sterile or to die in childbirth.

754 684 837 11. In order to wreak vengeance on an unfaithful wife who has left the conjugal home, the husband fetches a plant known by the name of uruburamadjo /406/ the etymological meaning of which (kubura kujya) is "to have no place to go," that is to say, to have no place to stay. This indicates the use to which the angered husband puts the plant, and the results he expects from it. He braids it into a sort of pad upon which he must place butter or pour castor oil that belonged to the unfaithful woman. The mystic pad is hidden under a rock. It must be removed a month later and placed under another rock. This method, add the credulous natives, infallibly creates difficulties between the fugitive woman and her temporary husbands. She will be dismissed as many times as her first spouse shifts the magic pad.

783 791 B. Purifiers or exorcisers of all sorts and exhumers or mutilators of corpses. In order to ward off evil spells and the deadly consequences that might derive from certain events such as the violation of a taboo, the burning of a hut, a murder, the coming across a corpse or a killed animal, or to avert the fury of a spirit on the rampage, the king, his court, and his subjects call upon the services of people called by the name of Abashumburuzi, Abahanyi b'amachumu, Ababuzi, etc. Like their other colleagues in the occult, mysterious, and magical sciences, these practitioners enjoy official and legal recognition.

1. The Abashumburuzi, sorcerers who are resorted to by taboo violators.

Abashumburuzi is the title given by the people of the Lukiga (that is, the mountain people) to a group of purifiers whose function is often the same as that of the mugangahuzi, or "protectors against lightning," with whom they are often wrongly identified.

755 783 The mushumburuzi, if one holds to the etymological meaning of his trade, is believed to have the power of expelling spirits from the body of a sick person (1). To do this, /407/ he performs veritable exorcisms, makes magic passes over the body of the patient, calls the spirits by name, and begs them to let go of their victim. He holds in the hand a bunch of shrub branches endowed with magic properties and moves them over the body of the sick person.

The spirit that caused the illness takes refuge in the symbolic broom. Then all the magician has to do is to take the spirit-chasing

755 tool and leave it at some crossroads....Woe to those, however, who
783 should fail to notice in time the itinerant abode of the evil spirit, ever in search of a new victim. According to popular belief, these sorcerers also have the power of averting the misfortune or punishment that follows the violation, no matter how involuntary, of any taboo, departure from custom, scorn of tradition, or even the appearance of any extraordinary object or event.

845 The birth of a freak child, the excessive growth of a fruit or plant, etc., may be prejudicial to the man who fathered or owns it.

Every unwonted event is a revelation to the Blacks. To them
787 nothing is fortuitous, and whatever deviates from the ordinary, no
783 matter how little, is a manifestation of hidden powers. After meeting with such evil portents, the Munyarwanda experiences the need for purification as he would after the violation of a taboo, to avoid the misfortune that would befall him. It is in this sense that they identify unfavorable omens with departure from ancestral custom.

784 Numerous are the prescription and customs whose strictly material infraction involves fearsome consequences, such as a particular disease or even death. Among the interdictions and prohibitions, some apply to everyone, others to one clan or another, to women alone, or merely to the king. Persons who are in mourning or in other special /408/ circumstances must observe numerous taboos and must abstain from a large number of actions. The interdiction frequently bears on an object or animal which must not be touched or eaten, and which must not be looked at.

There are also taboos about days, that is to say, the prohibition to engage in certain occupations on certain days.

843 There are many taboos to which a woman is susceptible during
783 her pregnancy. The sight of a canoe may cause her to give birth to a child whose lips are pointed like the prow of the boat.

If she meets with a killed animal, a dog, a wild boar, an otter, she may give birth to a dead child or one covered with sores like those which she saw on the corpse. The sight of a man who is being put to death or merely bound makes her liable to the same misfortune, and so does the burning of a hut. The sight of a weapon which has been used to kill entails the same consequences.

783 It is easy to see from these cases how frequently people must
843 resort to purification (1).

1. In certain cases, taboo violators need not resort to specialists and may purify themselves by a simple method.

If a pregnant woman has come upon a death weapon, a bound prisoner, a killed snake, or anything else that is taboo, she must immediately procure some of those herbs or leaves with magic properties which are in common usage. She will bring them into contact with the corpse or bond, and then crush them to drink their juice or inhale their aroma. If there are no plants available, she first touches the thing involved in the taboo and then brings her hand to her forehead, where she traces a kind of sign of the cross. This is what Fr. A. Bros called "procedures of imitative magic." Religion des Peuples non civilisés /Religion of Uncivilized Peoples/, p. 72).

783 The rites of purification vary in accordance with the case, the individuals involved, and the sorcerer himself. Almost invariably, however, the latter pours into the person's hand a few drops of a liquid (issubjo) in which he has mixed the juice of certain plants with magic characteristics which have the property of curing all evils. /409/

5: Pagès--136 M-5 (ca. 1925) 1933 FO42 Rundi FO42

Taboos and Portents

784 Taboos (imiziro) and portents, good or bad, are innumerable. We must limit ourselves to a few samples without taking any account whatever of their rational classification, which would be at best a very difficult undertaking.

The appearance of an evil portent or the violation of a taboo make the Banyarwanda liable to misfortunes which vary in magnitude with the seriousness of the infraction, whether or not it was voluntary.

We know that it is not easy to give an exact definition of taboo, for the subject is vast and far reaching.

A taboo does not involve merely the obligatory respect due to traditional customs and practices or the observance of sacred rules, but also a group of prohibitions and interdictions dealing with an object or an animal which may not be touched, which may not be eaten, and which may not be looked at (1).

1. Let us add that in certain cases portents and taboos are identified with each other in the minds of the Blacks, as we have stated above.

What is taboo to one person is not taboo to another.

262 784 As for taboos dealing with animals whose flesh is impure and may not be eaten, the rule is not the same for everyone.

With the single exception of cows, the flesh of all animals is forbidden to women.

Mutton is taboo to certain clans, while goat meat is forbidden to others.

Fish and wild boars are forbidden to the Banyarwanda with the exception of riverain people and hunters. Hares, partridges, ducks, and guinea fowl are included among the impure animals (2) /410/

2. Children sometimes eat them in secret.

784 The death of a family member makes the foodstuffs remaining
262 in the hut taboo, as well as the objects and tools which belonged
768 personally to the deceased. These objects may be purified with
lustral water.

784 Even the widower or widow becomes taboo at the death of
768 the spouse and must undergo rites of purification.

Cohabitation between spouses becomes taboo upon the death
833 of a close relative, the king, or the queen mother. This remains in
784 effect for a period of time that varies with the importance of the
[764] deceased.

Marital relations are also forbidden in certain circumstances prescribed by usage or tradition, for example, at the time of a clandestine marriage proposal (1).

[825] In the two preceding cases, the rules demand that the bull, billy goat, ram, and even the rooster be separated from the family herds and flocks!

784 All field work is forbidden at the time of funerals, as well
[461] as in the following cases: when lightning strikes the courtyard or hut, when a son is born, when a dog dies, when a hut burns, when it hails. On such occasions, work is forbidden only for one day.

Women and herders may not touch sorghum mush while it
[842] lies on the household spatula (umwuko). If she were to disobey this injunction, a woman would risk bearing only daughters. As for the

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[584] 1. In order to force a girl's parents to give their daughter in marriage, an individual need only come into their hut under some pretext and covertly leave one of his bracelets there. After having taken leave of the household, he cries from afar, "Take good care of the object I left behind." The girl's parents believe that they must give her to him in order to avert misfortune.

784 keeper or owner of a herd, his property would also suffer from this infraction of custom (2). /411/

2. His cows would bear only
male calves.

A husband may not use this kitchen utensil to beat his wife! He would risk the loss of his life.

The failure to observe most of the prescribed customs while celebrating a wedding would make the parents of the two partners liable to illness or death.

[551] When asked what their name is, children, young men, and girls either do not answer or give a false name, for fear that the stranger may cast an evil spell upon them and thus prevent them from growing.

[841] A woman in her menses may not enter a hut where there is a newborn child, lest she cause the baby to contract scabies. Hence [751] the custom of placing a copper-thread bracelet (urunyerere, or urwinjiri) about the neck of babies as a talisman and preventive.

[643] The king must never bend his knees, in order not to expose his kingdom to becoming smaller.

A father may not step over the hide that serves as a portable cradle (ingobyi) for his child, nor may a son step over his mother's belt.

A woman may not step over a spear, milk a cow, repair the roof of a hut, imitate (!) the cry of a rooster, etc.

It is forbidden to sit on a food basket.

When it thunders, one may not smoke a pipe when seated on a chair.

No one may rest on a sheepskin, or he will contract scabies (ngo badahumana). There is danger of death involved in carrying a whetting stone (ityazo) into someone else's house.

[825 777] It is expressly forbidden to kill certain birds and certain reptiles, not only because they are totem but also because they are regarded either as good luck for the land, like the wagtail (inyamanza), or as bad luck, like the scaly anteater, whose dead body might draw great misfortunes upon the territory. /412/

784 [484] A traveler who stubs his left foot against an obstacle or who meets with a rat whose pelt is slightly mottled (umushushwe) must return home, lest misfortune come to him.

If one finds black ants (intozi) on one's path, he must draw his hand over his foot as though to remove them, lest they swarm into his hut.

[843] A pregnant woman must not see a European nor hear the sound of a gunshot, else the child she bears will suffer (1).

[842] A woman who has borne only sons may not nurse the daughter of another woman, lest she bear nothing but girls from now on.

A man may not meet with his betrothed or with his mother-in-law prior to marriage (2). [643] The king was formerly forbidden to see his sons, at least in theory, for it has been proved that the last monarchs often broke this rule.

If the manufacturer of banana wine insults someone while crushing the fruit, he runs the risk of contracting the scurfy disease (guhumana).

A woman must keep silent while kneading sorghum dough. If a dog or chicken dirties the floor of the hut, she is forbidden to leave her work and clean the spot, or the bread may shrink.

If the bottom bananas in a bunch ripen first, the owner of the grove worries because it means that a danger threatens him. /413/

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[751] 1. In order to neutralize this influence, she need only procure a cartridge case, a piece of paper, or even a piece of tile, brick, or any other object of European origin, and wear it around her neck as an amulet or talisman. The child will be born safe from injury.

2. Cf. "Cérémonies du mariage /Marriage Ceremonies/," by Fr. Pagès (Anthropos, 1925).

784 A crowned crane that perches at the top of a hut, or a dog, goat, or sheep that manages to climb upon it, are sure signs of approaching misfortunes.

It is rigorously forbidden to kill a crowned crane, crow, wagtail, lizard, frog, or toad.

The parents of a newly married man may not partake of his meals unless they first cook a bunch of bananas in his house. Scurvy is the punishment for this transgression.

841 A woman who has just given birth to a child must see to it that the umbilical cord of the newborn is not lost. If there is food in the hut at the moment of childbirth, the mother may not touch it. If she broke this taboo she would contract a disease (guhumana).

The father of a baby whose teeth have not yet come out may not take a new wife without exposing the child to the danger of contracting the acute scurfy disease (amahumane).

543 If a child wishes to sit in a chair just vacated by his father, he must first place there a little straw. If he were to act otherwise, he would risk his father's curse.

Children are not permitted to lean against the post which is reserved for the family head. This, too, is done for reasons of propriety.

The owner of a calf whose hooves have only one toe as the result of a congenital deformity may not butcher it except at his own home. The meat of the animal may not be eaten elsewhere. It must be eaten on the spot with the sorghum bread brought by each guest. At the end of the meal, the guests wash their hands in the courtyard and not outside of it.

A goat that sits...on its behind must be butchered /414/ or sold immediately, so that evil will not befall the occupants of the hut.

A hunter of "feli-cervaline /?/" (tiger cats) must be careful careful not to make too many victims among those carnivores so as not to risk unfortunate consequences. A peasant threshing beans in the pod must see to it that no one steps on the threshing floor while he is working.

He would experience the surprise of seeing his provision of beans diminish if a passer-by were to stop suddenly before him.

784 [842] A young girl may not follow the path trodden by cows while her betrothal arrangements are being made. She must take another path in order not to risk becoming sterile.

When a hut is finished and covered with thatch, the wife of the hut's owner must bring into it with her own hands the household spatula, which, according to the customs of the land, is her own symbolic weapon and safeguard. The observation of this rite insures her of not being expelled from the hut and of living on good terms with her husband.

To forget one's stick at a neighbor's house is a worrisome thing. It is to be feared that the stick will be used for magic procedures against the owner of the forgotten object.

787 If your heart beats as if it were about to break in the chest, it is a sign that someone is speaking ill of you somewhere.

If your chest feels heavy, if you feel ill in the stomach, it is a sign that your sister-in-law is pregnant and will become a mother.

An itching felt at the spot where a drop of blood was taken to seal a friendship pact is a certain portent of the blood-brother's death.

789 691 In order to help a litigant's suit along, his relatives wrap a mwishwa stalk around his chair. /415/ During the proceedings of the case, a member of the family sits on the chair and sweeps all around it, as if to ward off an evil spell. For even greater certainty of success, one also places under the chair the whetting stone (ityazo), which is called "obstacle" (ikinanira) in sorcerers' terms. This symbolic act has the function of stripping away all the effectiveness of the other side's testimony and evidence. "Their words will go with the wind" (amagambo yabo azahita nk' umuyaga), as popular belief has it.

[273] The plaintiff, on his part, must abstain from drinking beer made with bananas of the kind called iginyambiba or igihuna. Thanks to such precautions, he will have every chance of success.

784 824 There also exist taboo plants and shrubs. Mwange (umwange) is a plant with a symbolic and meaningful name derived from a verb (kwanga), which means "to hate, to detest, not to like." Girls must never touch it when gathering dry twigs or dead wood for the hearth, for fear of... remaining spinsters. Old women alone have ceased to fear it and do not hesitate to use it for their cooking needs (1).

824 1. The Blacks set great store by plants with magic properties. It would be easy to make up a long list of them. A whole separate study could be made about them, in view of the number and importance of popular beliefs concerning the vegetable world. "From the most humble herbs to the largest trees," says Fr. Sébillot, "/plants/ play a role which for many years has drawn the interest of scholars." (Le Folklore /Folklore/.)

783 2. "Spear purifiers" (abahanyi b' amachumu) and their exorcisms.

The word umuhanyi, plural abahanyi, comes from the verb guhana, which means literally "to punish, to reprimand." It is only in a figurative sense that it means "to purify." The word guhanula is used to describe the performance of the purifying rites. /416/

The spear purifier exercises his functions at the time of a murder or assassination.

He is called upon by the victim's relatives to give satisfaction to the dead person and the members of his family by aiding them to obtain justice for the spilt blood with his mysterious procedures. He purifies the spear or death weapon with the aim of preventing or arresting the fatal consequences which the murder would not fail to involve for the dead person's relatives. The latter, fearing that they will undergo the same fate as their dead kinsman, call upon the sorcerer. He often works simultaneously with the "conjurer of spirits" (umushyitsi, umuhamagazi), who also has a role to play at this time, and sometimes both functions are filled by the same man. Among other rites, for we do not intend to describe them all (they would be more pertinent to a study dealing exclusively with funeral ceremonies), we shall cite only those pertaining to the role and function of the "spear purifier."

783 The weapon must be both "punished" and "purified" at the same time.

If the weapon involved is a spear that was successfully retrieved, the sorcerer first unhafts it. The spearhead is set aside, its tip (umuhunda) broken to pieces, and a few wooden scrapings are removed from the shaft (uruti). This debris is placed in a small gourd of the type called idegede (1). If the actual weapon is not available, the purifier works with a similar weapon, but a used one. Then the gourd is filled with beer. Owing to its mystic usage and to the scrapings that were placed in it, this gourd bears the name of akabatongera in sorcerers' terms. The relatives who are present take a mouthful of this pombe. The gourd with the scrapings and spearhead is then entrusted to someone who is an outsider (umuse) to the clan or to the family, and who goes /417/ and hides it in an isolated spot, such as a thicket, a cave, or a hole of some sort. The same is done with any other weapon that may have been used to commit the crime, arrow, sword, or knife.

783 ... "A practice of this kind, " says Levy-Bruhl," is almost universal among African tribes.

171 "Those ceremonies are carried out because it is thought that the weapon bears calamity or fatality with it. This is the case among the Akamba. According to them, a weapon once used to commit a murder will continue to be the instrument of new deaths. No ceremony, charm, or magic of any sort, however, could ever exhaust this deadly property. The weapon will continue to kill indéfinitely through its master's hand, no matter what he may do. Since there is no way of removing this curse, the Mkamba uses guile. He places the weapon on a path or at some spot where a passer-by is likely to see it. Once the latter has picked it up, the deadly influence of the weapon falls upon him and the first owner is freed from it. . . . " (1)

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1. Henceforth, the family may not eat this kind of gourd. (La Mentalité primitive /Primitive Mentality/, op. cit., p. 293.)

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> 1. A Munyarwanda would never pick up such accursed weapons, whose origin and function he knows only too well. The curse which is attached to them and the fear which they inspire cause him to go his way without a covetous glance.

In certain clans the purifier-sorcerer slips the scrapings into a sweet potato which he feeds to a goat. The latter is then sold to strangers faraway on whom falls the curse attached to the weapon which was used to commit the murder. The price of the animal, which was formerly paid in kind (hoes, peas, beans, sorghum, etc.) was renounced or thrown away. The victim's family considered that they were thus freeing themselves completely from the evil spell which befell them through the violent death of one of its members.

769 783 628 In order to pacify the spirit of the deceased, a young man of the kin group is chosen during the funeral ceremonies to avenge him. He must obtain a new /418/ spear which the purifier-sorcerer or his colleague, the "conjurer of spirits," takes from his hands in order to cut in two a plant with a mysterious property called irago or umurago. "I have 'cut up' the tribe of murderers," he says, "may they all die of it." Then, addressing himself to the deceased, "Here is the spear that will avenge you. Grant it the opportunity and the power to carry out the vendetta."

[766] According to customs peculiar to each clan, the body λ is exposed on a deserted hill, hidden far out in the bush in rocky crags, or buried near the village or even in the courtyard.

In the latter case, some irago, or if there is none some murago that grows in the swamps, is planted along with its roots. At the end of about a year, the sorcerer comes back to cut this plant /again/, as he did once before. Then a goat is sacrificed.

The purifier takes some of the blood of this offering and sprinkles it on the grave, saying, "Let this blood cause the entire family of the assassin to perish."

λ[i.e., of a murdered person -Analyst]

783 The murderer in turn worries about the consequences of his act. He appeals, therefore, to the same kind of operators in order to avert the vengeance and the curse which he was wrought upon himself and his kinsmen.

The rival of the previously mentioned sorcerer takes a reed which he cleaves throughout its length without altogether separating the tips. He draws apart the two rods, which are stuck into the ground. The culprit and members of his family pass under this novel type of bridge. The operator seizes the reed, puts its two parts back together, and tosses it at a distance, saying, "I have warded off the spirit (of the deceased) that was pursuing you." Then, leading his client to a crossroads, he sprinkles him with a few drops of a liquid he has prepared and which contains the juices of certain plants.

Standing back to back with his protégé, the sorcerer /419/ slips into his hands some amulets which he must wear around his neck. "Just as we cannot see each other," adds the protector against sorcery, "may the spirit of the man thou hast killed never see thee (find thee)." Then he tells the man to lie flat on the ground. Taking a sort of broom (urutsiro) made of plants with magic properties, he brushes it over the body of the individual. "Ndagushumburuye, I have caused the spirit of the man who pursued thee to depart," he adds.

The operation has every chance of success if the murderer manages to obtain through gifts the services of the sorcerer who "worked" for the victim and his relatives.

3. "Exhumers and mutilators of corpses" (ababûzi), from the
789 word kwabura, "to exhume a corpse."

751 They are resorted to in two cases; /first, / when it concerns a criminal who has been executed, and his spirit must be prevented from harming the living, that is to say, those who killed him. We shall speak of this later in the course of this work.

The second case is the following: The murderer, a man of common extraction, whether he killed willingly or unwillingly, wishes to be protected in turn against the wrath of his victim's spirit. To this end, he calls upon one of the exhumers of corpses who helps him obtain the body of the slain man (this is not always easy). Then the corpse must be mutilated in order to drive the spirit out of it.

789 751 The sorcerer mutilator cuts off a tiny piece (isonga) from the tongue, heart, little finger (umuhera), and skin, and these pieces are dried above the hearth. All of this is then enclosed in a small horn, preferably black, which the assassin wears around his neck as a talisman and which guards him not only against his victim but also against the latter's relatives.

It is also good to procure some of the herb called irago or umurago which has been planted on the slain man's grave. /420/

If this is added to the other gruesome items contained by the horn, the talisman becomes more powerful.

We may add that these people charge very high fees for their services. A bull, at least, is required.

695 C. Sorcerers who preside over ordeals and who prepare the test poisons. Sorcerers of this type bear the name of Abashozi, hence the verbs gushora, "to put someone through a test," and gushoka (a neutral verb) to designate the test itself.

It does seem that here in Ruanda ordeals are employed only in criminal cases and that their sole object is to prove the innocence or culpability of those who submit to them, as was formerly done in the Middle Ages. Our Blacks have such faith and trust in such judicial methods that they believe in their absolute effectiveness. They have never given a thought to the absurdity of those divinatory tests, in which chance and fraud play such a predominant role.

695 278 [824] Such tests are numerous, but the most widespread is that which consists of drinking or smoking the urwizilinga, a kind of shrub that seems to bear at least a superficial resemblance to datura (1). In any case their effects are similar.

1. Moavi is used as the test poison practically throughout the rest of Africa. This plant does not seem to exist in Ruanda. The matter, nevertheless, would be worth investigating.

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The maker of test poison usually handles it in the form of a powder which he mixes with water or with pipe tobacco. The accused, male or female, must draw two or three puffs from the pipe. The results are swift. One of the smokers or another, or even several of them at once, is almost immediately seized with a real madness (*kussàra*) which strips him of his reasoning faculties and which may last sometimes /421/ close to a month, as we were able to verify. The unfortunate victim eats or takes to his lips everything he finds along the way, no matter how unlikely or even repulsive (*amabyi!*) it may be.

He casts off his clothing, and a mother tosses away her child and goes off, raving or gesticulating like a true lunatic.

Then the intoxicated person sinks into a nightmare-ridden sleep. He talks in his sleep and speaks of ghosts and wild animals which he believes he sees.... In short, he becomes very trying to his family. Could this not be a simple case of autosuggestion, which occurs frequently among Blacks?

If the patient pleads guilty right from the onset of the illness and begs for mercy, the same sorcerer administers to him a counter-poison, another vegetable powder mixed with a little "chloride of liquid sodium" (*inkari!*), which immediately neutralizes the effects of *rwizilinga*. The Batutsi also know that in such cases it helps to give fresh milk to those who have taken the poison.

We are acquainted with a case where nearly ten individuals submitted voluntarily to this test. Only two of them were affected. They were deemed guilty then and there. It so happens that the true culprit was discovered some time later. He had not been subjected to the ordeal.

The people nevertheless continue to praise this judicial procedure. Certain things are even related about the subject which are amazing but untrue, and which do naught but strengthen the prestige of the sorcerers (1). /422/

1. "The European cannot help considering, first and foremost, the physiological effects of the

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poison. Accordingly, /in his own mind, / the results of the ordeal will vary in direct proportion with the strength and amount of the drug taken into the organism. If the dose is sufficiently strong, it will invariably do away with the person who swallows it, whether innocent or guilty. If it is insignificant, it will do no harm to the worst criminal. The Whites consider it extraordinary that the native should disregard such simple truisms.

"The point of view of the Blacks, however, is completely different. The idea of what we call "poison" is not clearly defined in their own minds. They know by experience, no doubt, that certain concoctions have the power of killing those who drink them, they are nevertheless unfamiliar with the mechanics of poisoning, and do not attempt to understand it. They do not even suspect its existence. According to them, these concoctions may be deadly only because they serve as vehicles for mystic forces, just like the remedies which they use to cure diseases and whose effectiveness they explain wholly in this way.... The Blacks do not grasp the actual properties of the test poison, but consider only its mystical and immediate power....

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> It is a sort of mystic reagent, and as such it is infallible.
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> "The native is so convinced of this that often he takes no precautions before undergoing the test. He does not make use of his right to watch while the poison is being prepared, he does not scrutinize the dose to see whether it may not be too strong, the liquid too ~~thick~~, etc.... Why should he, since the beverage does not act physically, so to speak, but spiritually? It does not matter whether a little less or a little more is swallowed. The outcome of the test does not depend on this...
> "Such is the faith they have in trial by ordeal that the natives regard the matter of who pounded the poison into powder as an unimportant detail." (Levy-Bruhl, La Mentalité primitive /The Primitive Mentality/, pp. 250 and 251.)

[[81]] Full of trust, sure of their innocence, and excessively naïve, the natives are completely blind to the frauds of the sorcerers, who call the accused persons in turn into a hut or to an isolated spot. What crimes and injustices have been committed by those doctors in occult sciences!

Other Judicial Tests

695 A. The drum test. One rubs cow dung on the surface of a drum and pours some water onto it, which the accused gathers in his hands and brings to his lips, while the man who presides over the ordeal loudly cries, "May the shades of the deceased and the spirits

of the initiates (in the Ryangombe sect) abstain from interfering. As for you, may you be subjected to the sole influence of the test!"

If the accused is guilty, he must "theoretically" suffer and die of excruciating intestinal pains after submitting to the test. /423/

B. The bell test. This test consists of making the accused persons drink water into which a small bell has been plunged for an instant. "May this beverage," says the judge, "cause you to die if you have been justly accused." "Let me die," each of the accused says in turn, "if I have lied!" A disease similar to leprosy will cover the body of the perjurers.

C. The ordeal called "rush-basket ordeal" (urutete). The basket is made of rushes or papyrus stems, with spaces one or two centimeters wide between the coarse meshing. The accused person sits directly on the basket, holding in his hand the sword which is the usual badge of Ryangombe. The bystanders stick their spears into the ground, haft downward, around the man and his improvised seat. A handful of grass of the ishinge kind is brought and laid down by the basket. "If I am guilty," says the man, "may I be the victim of these spears. I call upon you, Ryangombe, king of the initiates! If my innocence is not recognized, I promise to offer you as many cows as there are openings (holes) in this basket and blades of grass in this bunch."

D. The red-hot billhook ordeal. The accused puts some saliva on the billhook, which is held above a fire set up in the courtyard.

The bystanders use a winnowing basket to fan the flames. As in the case cited above, the man who presides over the test, requests the spirits of the dead to refrain from interfering and to let the test follow its course. If the billhook becomes red, the innocence of the individual is proved.

E. The "iron-piece" test. Two spears are stuck into the ground on the public square. Between them is set an earthenware jug or wooden vessel in which a beverage is prepared /424/ with disparate and repulsive ingredients. Cow dung, the droppings of birds and animals (crowned crane, crow, etc.), honey and beer, the leaves of certain plants (the castor-oil plant, isenyanguzi), etc., chopped up

695 in the liquid, such are the ingredients of this drink which is prepared for God's judgment.

A small piece of iron, kadigi, which is believed to have a magic property, is tossed into the vessel. Gravity and solemnity are the rule during sessions of this kind. A drinking tube is given to the accused to take the poison. Some people are made seriously ill by it, while others are able to "relieve" themselves almost immediately, which goes to prove their innocence.

F. The chick test. The accused are given small chicks which have just hatched. Each of them must hold one in his hand under the supervision of watchmen who are supposed to prevent tricks and infractions in the proceedings. The chick which survives the lack of food for the longest period of time (about one day and one night) proves "in its own way" the honesty of its lucky owner.

G. The boiling water test, so well known and so popular in the Middle Ages. The procedure is the same.

The numbers and kinds of ordeals vary among the provinces of Ruanda. Many of them were borrowed from neighboring lands with which the Banyarwanda have frequent contact.

Up to now, both plaintiffs and defendants had frequent recourse [177] to those methods. The introduction of European tribunals has dealt a death blow to tests of this sort, which occur in the beginnings of every civilization. /425/

Chapter 3

Rain Makers or Tempest Makers (Ababvubyi).
Protectors Against Lightning (Abagangahuzi).
Ravagers of Crops and Fields (Abahoryo).

791 Owing to the people's credulity, the services of these personages are among the most valued and also the most lucrative. They seldom live at the capital, or go there only occasionally when summoned expressly.

791 The dangers which formerly threatened them in times of drought were such as to keep them away from the capital.

132 Before mentioning their duties, we deem it useful to list the
221 names of the native months and seasons with a short explanation of
805 their meaning. This will make it easier to understand the importance of these men to their compatriots, whom they fleece shamelessly.

Part One

Months, Seasons, and Principal Rains

I. Native Months

1.	Nzeri	October	7.	Werurgwe	April
2.	Okwakira	November	8.	Mata	May
3.	Ogushingo	December	9.	Gichurassi	June
4.	Okuboza	January	10.	Kamena	July
5.	Mutarama	February	11.	Nyakanga	August
6.	Gashantare	March	12.	Gatumba gatoya Gatumba kanama	September "

Nzeri, October, is the first on the list (imfura y' amezi). The Banyarwanda, indeed, count from October onward and regard this month as the most important because the cultivation of beans begins at this time.

Okwakira, November, comes from the verb kwaka (or kwakira), which means "to shine" because the sun is quite strong. /426/

Ogushingo, December, is reputed to be a very rainy month.

Okuboza, January, comes from the word kuboza, "to rot." It often happens, indeed, that the rains of the preceding month persist and seriously damage the crops.

The word Mutarama, which comes from the verb gutarama, "to nibble" (like the verb guhekenya, with which it is synonymous) was given to the month of February because it is at that time that one finds in certain parts of Ruanda, here and there, a few ears of ripe sorghum which children do not hesitate to cut off and eat.

221 *Werurgwe*, April. This word designates microscopic insects
805 which occasionally prey on sorghum and quickly destroy it. Hence
the expression, "Go and see whether the (above-mentioned) insects
[539] have attacked (the sorghum)" (*Mulebe ngo Werurgwe itayajamo*).

Gichurassi. This is the baleful month (*ukwezi kubi*) during
which the annual mourning which lasts 15 days takes place at court.
It is also the time of colds and bronchitis, hence the common ex-
pression, "He who lies down with a cold will be carried away (made
[539] to die) by the month of June" (*Uryamye ibichurane, igichurassi
kizamutwara*).

Kamena, July. This month is thus called from the word
kumena, "to shatter" or "to tear out," because in those provinces of
Ruanda where sorghum is cultivated only once a year people harvest
the ripe ears in order to crush the grain and make bread (*umutsima*),
which they have not tasted for a long time.

Nyakanga, August, comes from the word *gukanga* "to frighten."
It is called thus because it is often fatal to old cows (*amabuguma,
ibibuguma*), hence the common expression, *Nyakanga ikanga amabuguma*,
[551] "The month of August frightens old animals," that is to say, causes
them to die.

The two terms *Gatumba gatoya* and *Gatumba* /427/ *kanama*
formerly served to designate two months, that is, August and September,
prior to the creation of the month of *Mata*, May. Today they indicate
the two fortnights in September, thus named from the word *gutumba*,
[132] "to swell," because the clouds begin to gather in the sky and the
rains begin to fall.

As for the month of *Mata*, it was created at the instigation of
the sorcerers under the reign of Lwabugiri.

Mata literally means "milk," and in a figurative sense it
means "abundance." It is also the name of a hill at Marangara, where
as already mentioned Mutara and his son Lwabugiri established their
residence because this area is reputed to bring good fortune to those
who inhabit it. It is said that once for several years the rains failed
to come and the crops did not ripen. In order to cope with this grave
difficulty, it was resolved that henceforth a new month would be
added to the year, and that this month would precede the month of

221 805 mourning (gichurassi) so as to give the crops time to ripen. And thus it was done. The name of the hill, a name of good omen, was given to the new month.

132 805 The native months correspond more or less to those of our solar year, owing to the elasticity with which the Banyarwanda endow their lunar divisions. They take the short rainy season, indeed, as their point of reference for cultivation and sowing. This rainy period bears the name of Nzeri and corresponds roughly to our month of October (1).

1. In some areas of vast Central Africa, the Blacks use the word masika, which means "rainy season" and belongs to the Kiswahili vocabulary. This term is preceded by the qualifiers "little" or "big" to denote the two rainy seasons. The little masika begins in October and usually ends in December. The big masika covers the months of February, March, April, and part of May.

We have heard it said that the Batutsi, herders living in the open air, acquired a practical knowledge of time from the plants and flowers that grow /428/ at regular intervals, and that they imparted this knowledge to the cultivators.

II. Seasons

221 805 The Banyarwanda also distinguish four seasons.

1. Uruhira, from the verb gushya, after its applicative /sic/ guhira, "to burn," designates the end of summer because this is the time when grass is burned everywhere. Another synonymous term is used, ku (1) Muyonga (ivu), which means "the time of ashes." One

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1. Ku or kw' before a vowel, or mu or mw' before a vowel /sic/, is none other than the preposition "at, in."

also says isekera, from the verb gusekera, "to cultivate," because the fields are readied at the end of summer although no planting or sowing is done, hence the difference from the word guhinga, which also means "to cultivate" but with immediate planting in mind.

2. Urugaryi. This term designates first and foremost the time when beans are cultivated (mw' itabira ry' ibishimbo) and also the time when the beans yield pods (imishogoro) tender enough to eat (gashogoro). This same season includes about a month of good weather, which enables people to harvest the beans and which has earned it the name of "little summer season." This first harvest usually takes place in January or February.

3. Itumba. This season corresponds roughly to our winter. The word that designates it comes from the verb gutumba, "to swell," to indicate that the clouds keep piling up and the rain keeps falling. Hence the synonym Urushyana, "time of heavy rains."

4. Ichyi or Mpeshi designates the summer season when the harvesting is done, hence the two synonyms mw' (1) itema from

/1. See footnote (1) immediately preceding./

gutema, "to cut," and mw' isarura from gusarura, "to harvest."

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As for the origin of the months and seasons, /429/ legend states that King Gihunga sent two of his sons to an important personage who controlled rain and good weather in order to ask him for divisions (ibihe) in the year. This extraordinary man was called Kibariro, "he who knows how to count." Thanks to the gifts that were presented to him, he agreed to adjust the year in this fashion. We can see that the Blacks manage to explain everything with their imaginative minds. It is also obvious that a slight tongue-in-cheek attitude always transpires through their many tales. It must be said, indeed, that they are not invariably gulled by their own legends and that they do not have absolute faith in them, although they tend on the whole to be rather naïve.

Another legend explains the origins of the Bashara, or corporation of appointed rain makers.

This took place, according to the chronicle, under the reign of Yuhi I. Drought prevailed throughout the land of Ruanda and threatened to destroy everything. The king, in his anxiety, called his son Rushura and ordered him to go to the Kinyaga and see Nyamukama, a famous sorcerer who controlled the rain.

The prince's mission was to learn from the rain maker the secret of drawing the beneficent element to the earth. His pride flattered by the royal request, Nyamukama gave the envoy a sealed wooden pot with instructions to hand it over to His Majesty. "Be very careful not to open it along the way." he warned, "and give it to your father just as it is." When Rushura had gone half the distance, he was overcome with curiosity. "I have been entrusted with something, and I don't even know what it is. Let's see, I'll open it. . . ." He undid the knot which held the grass cover. His eyes scanned the inside of the pot. He saw nothing. . . . The water had evaporated across his face. When he returned to his father, Rushura gave him the precious vessel. Yuhi opened it in turn and, to his great surprise, found it empty. "Is this all that Nyamukuma gave you?" the king asked. "Yes, father, this is all." "In this case, my son, you must return to the rain maker and ask him why this vessel is empty." /430/

Rushura left the royal hut, very much worried about the whole thing. He lifted his eyes to the heavens with a sigh. At that moment the clouds gathered and shed upon the earth an abundant rain.

Puzzled by this strange phenomenon, Yuhi called back his son and asked him to tell the truth, for he realized that something unusual had happened. Rushura shame-facedly confessed to his father what he had done under the promptings of curiosity and what had ensued. In spite of the sorcerer's warning, he had wished to look and the water had evaporated across his face, hence his sudden and unforeseen vocation as a rain maker.

Yuhi, who was very fond of his son and wished to give him the throne, had to choose a new heir and leave Rushara to his new fate.

773 821 614 This is how the young prince became willy-nilly the father of the present Bashara, or rain-maker, lineage, which has inherited his vocation.

789 821 If they wish to bring rain, these people[1] go outside, look at the sky, and spread out their arms. If they wish to favor only the hill they inhabit, they must sit. If they wish to benefit the entire land with their astonishing power, they must stretch out at full length and spread out their arms at the same time. The storytellers add that this is how the descendants of Rushara have acted ever since that time.

[686] Up to these last few years, rain makers were exposed to serious dangers. It was not unusual to hear that one or another of those unfortunate creatures had been killed or thrown into the river for failing to produce the needed rain on time.

[773] According to another interpretation of the same legend which is very popular in the central province of Nduga, Rushara disobeyed the orders of the sorcerer at the proddings of the demon of curiosity after he had crossed the Nyabarongo. The water ran out of the pot and spread onto the ground. Nyamukama was informed and replied that in order /431/ to get rain, all that was needed was to build upon the spot where the water from the vessel had been spilled, and to dig into the hill (mubuz' imvura, mwubake, muhafukure). Many of the kings of Ruanda have indeed elected this hill as one of their favorite capitals.

[103] In times of drought it is customary to scratch its soil lightly as though searching for a spring, and it is said that Nyamukama's prophecies always come true. This is why the area is appropriately called Bgeramvura (kugera imvura), that is to say, "the place where rain comes forth."

It is for the same reason, and to obtain the same results, that at Mata in Marangara, people dig into both sides of the hill.

The first of the two holes is called "the fountain of milk" (iliba ry'amata) and symbolizes abundance. Cows will then yield more milk. The other hole is called by the name of "source of rain" (iliba ry'imvura). Just by dealing it a few blows with a hoe, a favorable influence is exercised upon the clouds, which will give forth a beneficent rain.

[1] [i.e., the Bashara. - Analyst]

III. Names of the Principal Rains of the Year

405 The generic term for rain is the word imvura. To make rain
821 is called kubvuba, hence the name of the occupation, umuvubyi, or "rain maker," which is largely the specialty of the members of the Bashara clan.

1. Imvura y' umuhindo, "thunder rain," from the word guhinda, "to thunder," because it is a stormy downpour accompanied by lightning and thunder (in October).

2. Amahole y' imvura, "persistent rain," from the word guhora, "to persist," "to last." It is also called imvura y' indoha (from the verb kuroha, "to flood").

3. Amahuhezi, from the word guhuha, "to blow," designates windstorms when the rain is driven by the wind. /432/

4. Amassuri, "torrential rain" (1).

5. Also called imivumbi, "rain that begins early in the morning and falls during the greater part of the day."

6. Amahindu, when it rains and hails (urubura, "hail").

7. Urushyana serves to designate the long rainy season in March, April, and part of May.

8. Impungira mirara or inyagira mirara, "rain that falls on several sorghum ears left in the fields"; it occasionally falls in July.

9. Intsindagir' ibigega, "rain that packs tight (the sorghum stored in) the granaries," because it falls for a day or two at the end of August when the granaries have not been covered in time.

10. Imvura y' impangukano, "rain that ends the waiting period," that is to say, the first rains that were hoped for in order to cultivate the soil (guhanga, "to hope for," and its reverse /sic/ guhanguka, "to see one's hopes fulfilled").

11. Inkaza bigunda, from gukaz' ibigunda, "to make the grass lands green again," designates the few more or less unexpected rainfalls at the end of summer.

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(1) Umuvu serves to designate the bed of torrents suddenly scooped out by the rain.

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821
12. Imvura y' igisanura (2), "the rain that soaks (the parched lands), that is to say, the first showers of the rainy season.

IV. Seasonal Rites

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When the sorghum-sowing time (mu kubiba) comes by, the mistress of the household takes a handful of grain which she proceeds to grind. With the resulting small amount of flour, she fashions a roll into which she slips some fruit of the shrub called intobo. Then the roll is placed in a small basket (interero or chyibo) along with a household spatula (umwuko) /433/ Meanwhile, the children of the household wrap the embers from the hearth in a bunch of grass which should contain either bran or sorghum husks whenever possible. They bury this parcel in the field which is about to be sowed.

One must not forget to add to the contents of the basket a piece of iron dross. There remains only to place the whole thing in the storage granary (ikigega), which shall be filled to the brim at harvest time as a result of this symbolic and superstitious procedure.

The owners of the hut must see to it that none of their neighbors will come to get some fire (kulahura) and enter the hut until the day when the first sorghum shoots appear.

If one were to neglect this precaution, one would incur the risk of a bad harvest (ngo batabak' umugisha).

At the time when beans are cultivated, the owner of the field sticks his spear into the ground and places on the tip of the weapon a pod of unshelled beans which he drives in lightly. His children bring him a hollowed half gourd (uruho), which is used as a basin. He fills it with water.

On a grass pad he puts a rolling stone (ibuye ry' intosho). Then a handful of beans in the pod are placed on the pad for an instant and shelled.

2. Gusanura is a sort of auxiliary verb which is understood in a figurative sense and has many meanings, like the verb gukaza.

241 The beans are poured onto the back of an overturned winnowing
788 basket. Then the owner removes one of the long grass stalks covering
the entrance to the hut, and he places this dried stem on the winnow-
ing basket whose concave side is facing down. He takes the basket,
lifts it, and shakes it strongly with both hands in order to get the beans
into the other side of the grain-scouring implement.

This superstitious practice bears the name of bean "creation" or "multiplication." If a stranger /434/ happens by in the course of this ritual, he must not walk around the basket but pass to one side of it.

Then the beans are buried in the tilled ground in the hope of a rich harvest. This procedure is commonly used to insure good weather.

In their credulity and trust in superstitious practices, the Banyarwanda hope to exercise an influence over sunshine.

At the time of the sorghum harvest, when the Banyarwanda
[273] are extremely eager to secure beer from this plant (amarwa) of which
they have been deprived for so long, they expose the crushing stone
(ingasire) to sunlight, believing that they are "retaining" the sun in
this fashion. We may add that their knowledge of astronomy is nil.
821 They have only one generic term, inyenyeri, to designate the stars,
and another, nyakotsi, for comets (1).

1. Nyakotsi means "the /female/ one with smoke," that is to say, with a tail.

The sun (izuba), the moon (ukwezi), and the planet Venus (nyamuhiribona) are the only heavenly bodies for which they have specific names.

Part Two

Sorcerers Who Are Believed to Have an Influence on Rain, Lightning, and Crops

791 They may be put into three categories, as indicated by the title, to wit: rain makers, protectors against lightning and its fearsome consequences, and finally those who watch over the crops.

Rain Makers (Ababvubyi)

We have seen previously that the members of the Bashara clan are born rain makers, in the tradition of their alleged ancestor Rushara, who was granted this role quite unwittingly. /435/

Aside from the Bashara, there are other rain makers, such as those from Bukunzi in the Kinyaga and those from Bussigi to the north of Kigali.

Among them the trade is transmitted from father to son.

Here and there one finds impromptu rain makers of varying fame.

They are usually poor people, men or women, who came from another region, for here as elsewhere "no one is a prophet in his own land." They profess to be rain makers so as not to die of hunger.

This is indeed a lucrative although dangerous profession. In order to get rain the people must offer a gift called by the name of amasororo (gusorora) and which becomes due at least once a year. The king and the chiefs go so far as to present the rain makers with a cow or even several. Woe to them, however, if the beneficent shower fails to come. Numerous were the victims of this difficult art when the elements withheld their cooperation. Most of those unfortunate people were drowned or beaten to death for not practicing their calling properly, inducing or arresting storms according to the season (kubvuba no kwich' imvura). 686

Protectors against Lightning and Its Fearsome Consequences

791 They are known by the name of abagangahuzi (from the verb
kugangahura) Their honorable and lucrative profession does not expose them to any danger.

Their role is to purify, as their name (umugangahuzi) and their duties (kugangahura) indicate, and to avert any future consequences of lightning. Here are the various circumstances in which sorcerers of this kind officiate and the manner in which they operate.

761 1. When a human being is struck down by lightning. According to /436/ native belief, lightning is regarded as the king of the
766 sky, who comes occasionally and chooses subjects among men. It is
821 said in such cases that the person who was struck is a "living tax"
791 (inkuke) levied by the god, or else a subject or a page of his (intore).
As a consequence, laments are forbidden. So as not to displease the king of the sky, who may do as he pleases, the relatives and friends of the victim must dance and emit joyful cries while the drums are played.

766 The purifier-sorcerer then makes an appearance. Those
821 present receive from him, on the back of their hand, a few drops of
791 a liquid which they must allow to fall upon the ground. Then the
sorcerer pours some for the second time in the palm of their hand, and each of the participants drinks what is given to him.

766 Then they inhale in turn the aroma of another liquid substance
821 (issubyo) made by the purifier.

The victim's hut and all people present are sprinkled with a mixture of water and chalk. The corpse also gets some on the forehead and chest. Then it becomes proper to lay out the corpse, which the relatives would not have dared to do prior to the sorcerer's intervention.

The guests put around their necks a special grass stem (umwishwa) which, as we have seen, plays an important role in ritual ceremonies as though it had a purifying property. The deceased also gets one, and the funeral procession sets out for the place where the body is to be exposed.

766 In principle, the corpse may not be buried. Whenever possi-
821 ble, it must be taken to a mountain, a hill, or some other elevated
spot, to meet the king of the sky who chose to honor him (Yamukujije)
by calling upon him. In the Gissaka province, the body is left on
an old termite nest.

Rejoicing is the rule for the duration of the ceremonies. The
[152] close relatives must join in this novel festival with /437/ dances and
joyful cries in spite of their grief. If the deceased was a man, it is
said that the king of the sky made him his chosen subject. If a woman
588 or young girl was involved, she was chosen as his wife. This belief
766 had become so ingrained that if the unfortunate woman recovered
821 she could not be taken in marriage by anyone but the king. In the
more distant provinces, she was regarded as having actually become
the wife of lightning. She was then treated as a widow or divorcée,
that is to say, her "second marriage" (guchùra) was carried out as
simply as possible, without any of the ceremonies that go with the
wedding (kulongora) of a young girl.

Before leaving, the purifier-sorcerer stuck a ficus branch into
766 the ground at the spot of the accident, along with a bough of red-
821 blooming erythrina (umwuko), a reed, and a stalk each of ishoza,
[824 umurembe, ifubge, ilalire, urubamba, etc., to purify the spot and
783] avert any future consequences.

2. The role of the purifier-sorcerer when domestic animals
821 have been struck down by lightning. The corpses of the animals,
231 cows, goats, sheep, are left on the spot. No one may touch them
791 before the sorcerer arrives. If the accident occurred in the evening
796 and his services could not be requisitioned in time, watchmen spend
the night near the victims to guard them from hyenas and prowlers.

On the following morning at daybreak, people gather at the scene of the accident and beat drums as a sign of rejoicing. As in the preceding case, the sorcerer twice offers a liquid substance of his own making to each of the bystanders, and makes them inhale another.

Husbands must secure a few drops and bring them to the wives who remained at home. /438/ The bodies of the victims are also copiously sprinkled with it.

796 231 821 Then the owners are allowed to carve up the animals on the spot and to distribute the pieces. Words referring to buying and selling must be avoided, however, so as not to offend the lightning whose [422] property rights would thus be violated. The buyers are tacitly bound to compensate the owner. When the time comes for payment, they hand him the price of the meat, rated at its actual value, but without saying anything about it. The seller, if he wishes to induce a recalcitrant buyer to make payment, cannot bring up the subject in explicit terms.

At most he may go to the man's home bearing a native umbrella (issinde) which, owing to its function in times of rain and storms, is supposed to remind the delinquent debtor of the tacit agreement made after one of those storms. It is quite permissible for the debtor to play deaf and blind and refuse to understand. His creditor has no direct hold over him. In order to avoid the evils of lightning with which the seller threatens him in vain with the presence of his umbrella, our recalcitrant buyer need only toss far away the bones of [539] the piece of meat he had chosen and cry, "It was the king of the sky who gave it to me" (n'umwami yangabuliye). These words, pronounced in a loud and intelligible voice, are well understood by the creditor, who can do nothing else.... They clearly convey his dismissal and a definitive refusal.

In certain provinces the owner of a cow struck down by lightning and the people in his house must observe an eight-day mourning [833] period (okwirabura). Cohabitation between spouses is forbidden during that period, just as at the death of a member of the family. The bull, billy goat, and ram are separated from the herds. Cow milk is set aside, and no one may drink of it. When the eight days are over, the animal's master builds a special small /439/ hut on the spot where the animal was killed.

The other cows are milked there, or else the cream gathered [302] on previous days is used and immediately churned. Once the butter is ready, the participants rub it over their bodies while the women and children sing and shout their joy (bakavuz'impundu).

Beer is offered to the guests, and the day ends in the hope that the king of the sky (lightning) will not return to seek new victims.

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231 The purifier-sorcerer need not be present at this last ceremony.
821 Their role and presence were essential only on the day of purification. They always come away with handsome rewards, leaving on the spot protective herbs or lucky amulets (impigi za Biheko).

3. In some localities individuals also resort to these doctors
753 in mystical sciences upon the death of a leper or the burning of a hut.

783 a. The natives have an acute aversion to contagious diseases and especially to leprosy. Once the unfortunate victim of one of those terrible diseases is dead, the purifier-sorcerer is called in to carry out various ceremonies. He tosses lustral water upon the hut of the deceased, and finally sets fire to it. The onlookers run far away in order to avoid the smoke, as though it could transmit the disease of the deceased owner.

In the central province of Nduga, the sorcerer has a small hut built in which he places the son of the deceased. With one hand he sets fire to the hut, while with the other he rapidly snatches the child out of it.

The leprosy is supposed to have vanished forever, and henceforth no other member of the family will become its victim. The sorcerer vouches for this. /440/

b. In order to avoid the evils which might befall the owner of a hut that has burned or even his neighbors, the same sorcerer is resorted to. He makes his clients drink the liquid mentioned previously.

The site of the hut is sprinkled with lustral water, and the bystanders are also sprinkled with it.

Three reeds stuck into the ground and covered with banana leaves make an improvised hut in which the owner and his wife must stay for an instant (baryamana). The evil spell has been lifted. Henceforth, nothing is to be feared (bamaz' umuriro or bamaze ishyano, that is to say, "they have warded off all misfortune"). The diseases which might have afflicted those present at the accident and their unborn children have been averted forever.

791 In the Bugoyi, to the northeast of Lake Kivu, the role of protector against fire and its deadly consequences is the prerogative of a special category of sorcerers known by the title of Abahozi or

Abashumburuzi (1).

1. Umuhozi (plural abahozi) literally means "extinguisher." It is the noun from the active verb guhoza, "to extinguish," or from the neutral form of the same verb, guhora, "to cool off."

[191]

The common people, who do not know the vernacular language thoroughly and are unfamiliar with its riches and subtleties, often confuse in practice the names and professions of the numerous sorcerers who exploit the populace.

Sorcerers Who Are Believed to Exercise an Influence Over the Crops by Benefitting Them or by Endangering Them With Their Sorcery

They are called by the name of Abahinza, that is to say, "kings and descendants of the ancient aborigional kings," which goes to explain the origins of most of them at least.

In l'Histoire d'un Règne /Book III, not translated/ there was repeated discussion /441/ of those autochthonous petty kings, who joined the powers of priesthood with those of civil and military magistrature.

Among the best-known examples of these diviner- or magician-kings are Mashira, the famous sorcerer-king of the Nduga, Nkoma, the petty king of Marangara, and Rutoke, of the Buhanga. Their subjects could resort to them in every emergency, for they had an answer to everything. To read and foresee the future, to uncover hidden things, to bewitch and cast spells on their enemies and reduce them to impotence, such were not the least prerogatives of their position. They were also begged for a handful of grain of the time of sowing and cultivation, for this was believed to insure a rich harvest.

791 This was no doubt how the profession of "protector and defender of the crops" originated. It is now exercised by the bahinza, nearly all of whom are descended from the ancient petty kings subjugated by Ruganzu. They never gave offense to the Hamitic kings, who not only allowed them to remain but even protected them in the thought that they and their subjects might benefit thereby.

The professionals in this category are numerous, but the most renowned among them have been so far those from Lubengera in the Bgishaza and those from Suti in the Munyambiriri, because they were closer to the central province of Nduga and in continuous contact with the Hamitic court.

Their colleagues from the Kingogo, Bushiru, Buhoma, Bugamba, etc., were not well known outside their own home territory.

According to public belief, these masters of occult sciences
791 can place restrictions (kuvuma) upon the birds and insects that ravage
825 the crops. Caterpillars are the most dreaded because some of them
(ingungu) attack the stems of sweet potatoes and destroy every last one
of them, while others devour the leaves of trees in the summertime.
/442/

The latter are called bahema. Grasshoppers, weevils, and other worms or insects which attack the crops are no less feared. This is why the natives frequently resort to the bahinza and implore their protection. This protection is purchased with gifts in kind which the chiefs levy themselves on their subjects in order to enlist the intervention of the powerful sorcerers. Some of the bahinza have been known to add rain making to their other functions.

791 One of the sorcerers in this category, called Nyamitwe, who lived on the top of a mountain (Chungeri) in the Bugoyi province, had the idea of excavating a small well, about 1.50 meters deep, in the courtyard fronting his home.

Since the ground was impervious to water, rain water would remain there for varying lengths of time. This enabled the crafty fellow to spread the rumor that he had high powers over the clouds. An ingenious way of bringing grist /Tr.: in French, "water"/ to his mill!

754 The sorcerers who are reputed to unloose insects and other pests over the crops are called by the name of Abahoryo, which means "baleful men."

Popular belief indeed goes so far as to lend them this occult power, which causes everyone to fear them.

They are believed capable of the most evil designs.

In view of this, they are avoided and shunned as much as possible.

The natives will avoid carefully all matrimonial relations with them. This would entail every evil including sterility, which is not the least feared among them.

These dangerous men are believed to cast the /443/ evil eye (guter' umwaku) and are placed in the same category as the members of the Abahenyi, Abatchaba, and Abungura clans, who inspire the [578] same mistrust and the same repulsion. Thus the name Abahoryo, "baleful men," is regarded as an insult by the Abahoryo themselves.

The bahinza of the Bgishaza province have always had the reputation of excelling in the exercise of these supernatural powers. What wonders are not ascribed to them! One of them as one tradition goes, was condemned to death for some misdeed or other.

While he was being led to the place of punishment, he resorted to his occult powers. Vultures, hawks, eagles, and crows flocked instantly from every corner of the sky and descended with open beaks and claws upon the executioners and onlookers.

Filled with wonder, the Mututsi /Batutsi/ prince pardoned him.

Another time, two brothers from the same family quarreled over their sorcerer's birthright after the death of their father. When asked to interfere, the king decided that the position would go to the one who proved superior in skill.

It so happened that the dreaded caterpillars were devouring the sweet potatoes at the time. One of the men proceeded to exercise his art in order to do away with them. The other one used his power to act in an opposite way, and made them multiply without end. The caterpillars came out of the ground and covered the earth. "Now," he exclaimed to the monarch, "do you wish me to deliver you from them?"

754 The land was cleared instantly, to the stupefaction of the onlookers. The prince confirmed him in his position.

In closing, we need only cite the Italian proverb, "Se non è vero, è bene trovato /It may not be true, but it is a felicitous invention/." 789 The Blacks hold the sorcerers and their power in high regard.

The deep-rooted trust of the Blacks in the /444/ skill of their sorcerers and the efficacy of their magic practices has something to do with the stagnant state of their civilizations.

How much are the doctors of occult and divinatory sciences to blame in this connection?

"It would be unfair," says Maurice Delafosse, "to make the magicians responsible for this situation, for they share the belief of their compatriots in the efficacy of their art. They practice magic not only because it is profitable, but also because they are as credulous as their clients." (Les Civilisations négro-africaines /Negro-African Civilizations/.)

Chapter 4

Offices of a Recreational and Literary Nature

644 535 a. The dancing groups are numerous, and their motions interesting and varied.

The pages have a special dance known by the name of guhamiriza. The kwiyereka and kulambira are indigenous to the mountain dwellers and especially to the Bagoyi.

The renown of this latter group in connection with this type of dance harks back to their great chief Bushako.

The people of the Gissaka specialize in the kubyina urushara. [534] When the dances are accompanied by stringed instruments known by the name of inanga, they take the name of gutambir' inanga. When performed to the beat of the drum, they are called gutambir' ingoma.

535 The kubyin' umudiho is danced by both men and women, who range themselves in a circle and clap their hands in time while their feet tread the ground. /445/

The word "dance" conveys but imperfectly the pastimes we are describing.

They are rather war games and hunting games. The imitation and mimicry of combats and the pursuit of game are very expressive. The Blacks spend hours on end simulating a battle, challenging and crushing imaginary enemies. From time to time they put down their weapons or present them to the king in perfect unity of motion, sing for a while the great deeds of the monarch, and then renew their fictional struggle.

The men's mudiho and that of the women, or young girls, are closer to the dance.

The women first come forward slowly to the sounds of a chanted elegy, and then some of them leave the group and execute graceful movements guided by the singing and hand clapping of their companions.

Their dances are more aesthetic and less wild.

644 535 b. The corps of pages (intore, from the word gutora, "to choose"), who are recruited among the sons of chiefs, is not the least interesting among the groups who surround the king and who live wholly for his service and pleasure.

Along with the dancers, they contribute a great deal with their gambols and gyrations to the distinctive character of the public festivities which are celebrated at court from time to time, to the festival of the "First fruits," and to the day that closes the great June mourning (igichurassi).

They have special dances for which they undergo an apprenticeship almost daily for several years.

535 554 Like the king, each great Mutusi chief entrusts his pages to the care of highly paid dancing teachers who are to instruct their pupils in new motions and rhythms. This is why the training is carried out secretly /446/, so the "ballets" will be new. A chief derives honor and pleasure from hearing that his pages are the best trained. A great rivalry exists in this connection, therefore, among the various page corps and their respective chiefs.

535 The young men are sustained by the hope of eventually obtaining some cows, by the cheers of the spectators, and by the presence of the king.

On important festival days, the noble squires gird their loins
[293] with a colobus or calf pelt adorned with otter hide fringes. On the
head they wear a hat of banana-tree fibers that looks like long hair, and their chest is adorned with beads or long narrow strips. They wear bells on their legs and ankles, and they all hold in their hands a spear and a bow. They form groups of 40 or 50, which are differentiated by the richness or design of their costumes and ornaments.

One by one, at the command of the choreographers, they make writhing motions intermingled with jumps and shouts, coming and going with impeccable rhythm, revolving the head as though wishing to tear it from the body. The Blacks are very fond of those war dances, which are in fact marvels of technique.

It is the rhythmic motion of the feet that they admire most and watch most carefully.

644 We shall give here for what it may be worth a list of the names
535 of the principal page corps, including the dance groups of the Muhutu /Bahutu/ and Mutwa /Batwa/ race:

Pages and Dancers	Race	Chief
Inchogozabahizi	Abatutsi	Yuhi-Musinga
Intangamuganzanyo	"	"
Urugangazi	"	"
Ibirushya	Abahutu	"
Ishyaka	Abatwa	"
Inkerarugamba	"	" /447/
Indinzi	Abatutsi	Sebagangari
Inkeramihigo	"	Kayondo
Imbasharugamba	Abatwa	"
Inkorabahizi	Abatutsi	Chyitatire
Urwintwari	"	Nturo
Ingeri	"	Rukarakamba
Imbabazabahizi	"	Lwagataraka

644	Intagwabira	"	Lugerinyange
535	Inkwaya (from Bgana-Chambge)	"	Lwabusisi
	Amakuza (from Lukaragata)	"	"
	Impambara (from Bgishaza)	"	Rwidegembya
	Inkaranga (from Bugoyi)	"	Bushako

535 "How shall we describe those dances," says Chalux, (1) "which are as beautiful, as elaborate, and as orderly as the best Russian ballet? They are obviously war dances, and evoke the epic combats of old. They have style and majesty, but in spite of the exactness of motion, the refinement of effects, the artfulness of entrances, exits, and groupings, their essential beauty resides in the fact that they retain a free, sparkling, spontaneous, and seemingly unrehearsed element. Each dancer (there are only men), when observed individually, expresses in his leaps, his steps, and his attitudes the harsh joy of challenging and defeating the enemy. The head is always tossed back, sometimes literally tossed upon the back, and revolves on and on as though the dancer were lending it impetus to propel it through space, as far as possible, against a detested foe. The chest is thrown out arrogantly, the fists are clenched upon the bow and spear, and the arms are rigid, menacing, stretched in two parallel lines. The naked feet hammer on the bare ground, stressing the beat with resounding slaps. The leaps, which are prodigious, defy gravity. The man seems to remain suspended in mid-air while he turns about with a powerful twist of the back, and he touches ground only to spring up even higher /448/ or to simulate with strikingly realistic gestures a fight to the death, the glory of war, the pride of fighting well, of having good weapons, of being a man and a hero, and the full certainty of victory and all its intoxication!

"All this is so natural, so perfectly true, that one must wrench one's sight from the individual and look at the dancers as a whole,

1. Un An au Congo belge /A Year in the Belgian Congo/ (Albert Dewit, publ., Brussels), pp. 487 ff.

535 all performing exactly the same gestures at exactly the same time, to realize that their dance has been long rehearsed, that it is not improvisation but art, virile, inspired, and magnificently primitive!

"Burning eyes, mouths open on dazzling clenched teeth, feline motions, hip swaying that would shame a gypsy, rippling muscles, stamping feet, ankle bells, the wild gloomy gasps of great drums, the twist of gleaming bodies nude but for an antelopeskin, swinging headgear of long white hair, bold faces, rhythmic jolts, masterly precision, grace and vigor, a frenzied yet controlled youthfulness... What a unique and unforgettable spectacle!

"The dancers of Kayondo (a great chief) were outstanding. To the great surprise and secret mortification of Musinga (the king) his own dancers were a little less so.

"A vertical fold cleaved his black brow. To quote divine Virgil, when Jupiter knits his brows all Olympus trembles.

"Nyanza did not tremble, but I know that some young Batutsi who saw the expression on the face of their demigod were seized with uneasiness.

"The best dancers were the Batwa.

"Yes, the pygmies!...

"The victory in this memorable contact which lasted several hours went to a child, a little mite of hardly twelve, who outshone all the others in the supreme perfection of his dance. /449/

"It began to rain torrentially, as it always does near the Equator. The Batwa danced on.

"The harsh water slashed at them, tearing off their headgear and pressing their antelopeskins so close against their thighs and knees that their movements were hindered. They all went on dancing, but the sacred fire was put out by the storm. The child alone surpassed himself, his beauty heightened by frenzy.

"All eyes were focused upon him. Conscious that he was the center of attention, even for the king and the Whites who were with him, he gave himself completely to the dance. Intoxicated with pride, dealing and parrying fabulous blows, puffing up his small chest to the bursting point, slapping the puddles with frenzied feet and splashing everything around him, he filled the huge flooded enclosure with the suddenly overwhelming dimensions of his tiny self.

535 "His high-pitched, excited voice was heard above all the others when the Batwa, their dance over and their arms uplifted toward Musinga, all shouted at the same time, according to custom, one of these traditional phrases, 'I shall go to my death for the king!' 'When I fight, I kill twenty men!' 'I can no longer keep count of those I have defeated!' 'I shed the greatest amount of blood!'"

533 [534] c. These musicians who are reputed to be the most skillful are retained at court or called there frequently. Their instruments are most primitive. They have a flute (umwironge), the stringed instrument so widespread in equatorial Africa (inanga), and another instrument, more primitive still, the isenge (ocarina type) from which they draw unpleasant sounds. People originally from Usui introduced small drums into the country which they beat with their fingers and which were a great success with the king.

The cithara players are the favorite musicians of the populace.

They sing and accompany themselves on their instrument.

The themes of these songs are varied. They deal with the exploits of heroes, the national wars, and even with various /450/ ordinary events of everyday life. The subject is sometimes borrowed from dramas of which the essence and form are common, but they nevertheless draw the attention of listeners because they parallel their own mental attitudes.

533 539 We cite here one of those pieces. We heard it recited by a cithara player. He was seated amidst about ten of his companions, who all plucked their stringed instruments together and repeated certain words in chorus at the end of each phrase. The soloist sang, "A leopard left the woods long after sunset.

"He crossed Goko Stream near the village of Murunda (in the Kanage region).

"He came to the Gishwati country in the early evening.

"He came to the hut of the man called 'I am the man who knows how to handle difficulties' (Nziguye).

"The beast knocked at the door with his paw.

"The daughter of the house (recognized and) addressed the animal.

533 "Her father said, 'My child, what you have done is bad.

539 "'Evil will come unto us.'

"The carnivore knocked on the door for the second time.

"He entered the hut and hid near the rush wall (that divides the inside of the hut in two compartments).

"The woman got up to take a brand from the fire.

"The leopard leaped upon her and took her outside.

"With his claws he tore out her entrails (*imushing' urwara mu nda, hava mw' umwana*).

"The father got up to go to her aid.

"The animal had dragged his quivering prey into the banana grove.

"The husband, after a search, found nothing but a few blood-stained copper bracelets.

"After a period of time the feline returned. /451/

"The master of the house was not caught napping.

"His mind had been active since the accident.

"It was in vain that the leopard brought along Jack Rabbit (the prototype of the resourceful rogue who has a thousand tricks up his sleeve).

"He came near the hut.

"Nziguye ('I know how to handle difficulties') (1) had dug a deep ditch (covered with light branches).

"The leopard vanished into the trap and died there."

538 195 d. Aside from the bards and official chroniclers already mentioned, there are also at court some literary jousters who speak a refined language, who are appointed to the king's side, and who attend to him in shifts.

They are called *Abasizi*, from the word *gusǐgǎ*, which means "to speak a refined language." They expound the events of the day

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1. *Nziguye* is the substantive of the verb *kwizigura*, which means "to get out of trouble," "to escape danger through one's own resources."

538 in an amusing and literary form which is not understood by those who
195 are not in the know.

This is why the opposite of the verb gusǐgǎ is gusigura, which means "to explain." These men have great verbal facility and are always ready to improvise. The king takes pleasure in those literary jousts, which are not lacking in charm. Their language, which is very rich, lends itself readily to those witticisms which the Abasǐzǐ have built up into a vocation and livelihood. Their recruitment is usually entrusted to a great chief. The present incumbents of this office belong, on the one hand, to the Basinga and aBene Katambi clans, and, on the other hand, to the Bakōbga (Nyaruguru, near the Bisi Mountains).

538 Like the official chroniclers, they remain at the sovereign's disposal, ready to beguile his leisure and to make him enjoy literary pleasures.

539 In order to give an idea of their style and of their talent, /452/ we transcribe here three small pieces of their own making, chosen from among the simplest and easiest.

First Example

Agasǐgo ka Rumanur' imbāba.	A small literary piece about that (famine) which caused bits and pieces of hoes to come out (of their hiding places to buy food with them).
Ibyo bitag' imitsima.	What used to be called bread (to wit, the roots of banana trees).
Mitsindo yarabitsinze.	The Victorious (king) has delivered us from it (forever).
Intoke ziraruhutse.	The banana trees may (now) rest.
Ibyo twaryaga.	What we (formerly) ate.
Ngaho wabay' umutsima.	That it has now become (true) bread.
Mitsindo yarabitsinze.	The Victorious (king) has delivered us (from these evils).

539 Tulek' intōke. Let us leave (alone) the banana trees (their roots) (1).

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1. Times of want are unfortunately frequent among the Blacks owing to their lack of foresight. They till the soil only for their own personal consumption. If a crop is ruined by drought or too much rain, therefore, they run out of food. The narrator describes one of those famines and gives it the name of "that which caused bits and pieces of hoes to come out (of hiding)," no matter how worn, to be sold to blacksmiths. One would then attempt to buy food in neighboring provinces with those meager resources.

Reference is made to the roots of banana trees which are dried in the sun after being struck with the handle of a hoe in order to remove the potash. They are then crushed on the grain-grinding stone and furnish an indigestible food which does not satisfy and does not hinder the end, which is death, unless this imitation flour is mixed in with something more substantial.

Second Example

539 Akasigo ko gutur' umwami. A small literary piece (on how to address the king when offering gifts to him).

539 Nd' uwawe, nd' uw' imanzi.	I am yours, I am the Hero's (man).
Nkazibgira, Muzima.	I speak to him (to this Hero), oh perfect (king)!
Nivugire, nd' uwinganji.	Let me rejoice, I am (the man) of the Victorious.
Witwa Ndabagize.	You are named (oh king!) the master of their fate. /453/

[195] We may add that in order to observe the rules of euphony, the black men of letters are permitted to use poetic license and deliberately to make errors of syntax, construction, conjugation, etc.

Third Example

Akanganiro k' umubyeyi w' umwana.	Conversation of a mother with her child (to amuse him).
Umugor' atiny' umugabo.	The wife fears her husband.
Umugab' atiny' umwami.	The man fears the king.
Umwam' agatiny' inkuba.	The king fears lightning.
Inkub' igatiny' umugano.	Lightning fears bamboo (1).

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539 1. The Banyarwanda, especially those who live in the mountains, have the custom of setting up a long bamboo stem in the court-yard near their hut to protect against lightning. They believe that the latter is caged and harmless when it splits the bamboo.

539 Umwan' atinya nyina.	A child fears (respects) his mother.
Umugan' ugatiny' umuliro.	Bamboo fears fire (2).

[372] 2. "Bamboo fears fire" because people who live near the forest burn chiefly bamboo.

539 Umurir' ugatiny' amazi.	Fire fears water.
Amaz (i)' atiny' ifu.	Water fears flour. (3)

3. "Water fears flour," that is to say, the bread or "mush" into which it vanishes.

If' itiny' amenyo.	Flour fears teeth (4).

4. "Flour fears the teeth" of those who eat it.

Ameny' atiny' umuhoro.	Teeth fear the billhook (iron) (5).

[412] 5. "Teeth fear the billhook," as all other hard bodies, especially when made of iron, like the billhook, which is one of the most useful tools.

538 The Blacks of Ruanda have a rich and varied oral literature. They like witticisms, and since their language is rich in shades and nuances, they manipulate it with great art.

195 The most refined speech is heard at the capital.

The habitual frequenters of the court, lords, courtiers, and
644 employees, express themselves in flawless language, use the right
words and choice expressions, and give them the proper inflections,
for Runyarwanda is a phonetic /sic/ language. The appointed men
of letters, storytellers, bards, genealogists, and historians carefully
[521] watch their diction. Among them conversation is never /454/ dull,
for jokes and witticisms abound.

Considering the good taste that distinguishes the familiars of the king and the inhabitants of the central province of Nduga, it is not

195 surprising that they should be shocked and amused by the lingo of the
644 mountain dwellers and those who inhabit the frontiers of the realm.
The latter's language is far from refined. It teems with syntactical
and accentual mistakes and contains a mixture of foreign terms
borrowed from the tongues of neighboring groups.

More conversant than others with matters of language, the men at court readily argue about the worth or etymology of existing words, and willingly create others which are more adequate by drawing upon the genius of their language.

The plural word imiduha means "cactus." Its literal meaning
195 is "those (plants) that give to us." Since those kinds of plants, which
814 resemble the Abyssinian quelqual or kwelkol, are not of any productive-
ness to the Banyarwanda, the men of letters propose, at least theoretically, to replace the word with imyiha or ichyiha, both of which are purely conventional nouns devoid of this misleading connotation.

It is in the same spirit that the black academicians wish to substitute the word ikyiyone, that is to say, "large bird" for the usual term igikona, whose literal meaning is "that which ravages" (the crops). Our African "Immortals" /Tr.: term applied to members of Académie Française/ would also like to see the term umuguta used exclusively to designate a skeleton (or dried-up cadaver), and its synonym umwite reserved for the word "skin."

551 In their superstitious fear the Blacks avoid pronouncing the
195 names of persons, animals, and things of which they are afraid.
They are motivated by the spirit expressed in the French proverb:

Quand on parle du loup, il sort du bois /Talk of the wolf and he will come out of the woods, i.e., speak of the devil and he will appear./ /455/

Instead of calling the leopard by his real name, ingwe, the cowherds, shepherds, travelers, and all other persons who frequent the areas haunted by those animals use the following expressions:

"The one whose name is kept unsaid," Nyiramahole.
"The wind (fast as the wind)," Muyaga.
"The claw of claws," Rwara.
"The animal with the spotted coat," Bugondo.
"The voracious one," Kimizi.

[551] 195 So as not to risk meeting a lion /intare/, they use the following expression when speaking of that animal: "the glutton" (lwabgiga).

The Blacks are never at a want for words. Their language is rich and lends itself to subtleties and to the development of the new ideas introduced by the Europeans.

198 [575] In order to communicate among themselves, the members of the Ryangombe secret society have created a sort of dialect. Many of its more common terms are known to the uninitiated but arouse mirth when used in ordinary speech.

We shall list here some of the words in this Rumandwa dialect:

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Rumandwa	Literal Sense	Runyarwanda	Meaning
Ameza	"Good things"	Amata	Milk
Ubgihinga	"A difficult thing to cultivate"	Uburo	Eleusine
Ibihimbaza	"Things that satisfy /hunger/"	Ibishimbo	Beans
Amaranda (1)	"Creeping things"	Amateke	Taraud /the dictionary meaning "screw cutter" does not seem to apply here./
Umubonanya		Umutsima	Sorghum bread
Inganda		Inzoga	Beer
Akayoba nzara	"That which staves off hunger"	Itabi	Tobacco
Imirundi y' inkuba	"The legs of lightning," (that is to say, that which is shaped like a bolt of lightning).	Ibijumba	Sweet Potatoes /456/

1. Or amabya y' abak ungu.

198 Urwiko	"The silent one"	Inkono y' itabi	Pipe
192 Uruhunga		Inzoga y' urwagwa	Banana beer
Isakara	"That which has a roof"	Inzu	Hut
Gakungu	"That which has no horns"	Imbga	Dog
Inguruka		Ihene	Goat
Ihangi		Inka	Cow
Gukoroga		Gukama	To milk
Gutanyara		Gutabara	To go to war
Gutakura		Gukinga	To cultivate
Gaminga		Gahinga	Hilltop
iKinyamusenyi		Ikinyamunyu	Bunch of bananas
Umusenyi	"Sand"	Umunyu	Salt
Serukanaga (1)	"The man who binds"	Umutware	Chief

1. Gukanaga, the verb from which the substantive se-rukanaga is derived ("the man who binds"), is synonymous to the word kuboha, "to bind."

Ibifunga mwoyo (2)	"That which wears pants"	Abazungu	Europeans

2. The etymological sense of the native expression is stronger than that of the French translation and shows how poorly the Whites were regarded at first.

Umumputu		Umugabo	Man

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198 Umumkari	Umugore	Woman
Umwere wa giti	Umwana	Child

The cabalistic language of the initiates is not exactly refined. It would hardly be decent to list all the terms in their vocabulary.

Various Impositions on Subjects and Clans

644 Aside from the majordomos, stewards, and couriers (intumwa), one also finds at court the innumerable caterers to His Majesty.

It may be said as a general statement that everyone works for the king: architects, professional builders, weapon makers, blacksmiths, mat manufacturers, basket weavers, potters, tanners, tailors of colobus pelt garments, furnishers of scented wood (3), veterinarians, bleeders of /457/ cows, butchers, and other artisans of all types.

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644 Even the official "rat catchers" come regularly to carry out their duties, like the members of other corporations. Instead of being designated by the ordinary name of "trap setters" or "rat catchers," they are known by the euphemistic term of "sons-in-law" (abakwe), who come to marry (ngo baje kulongora). This is done so as not to arouse the suspicion of the rats when those important persons come to court.

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438 The honey which the king and dignitaries use frequently in the form of hydromel, their favorite beverage (inkangaza), comes chiefly from the mountainous regions rich in flowers and trees.

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[234] 3. The scented wood umugehsi, when converted into shavings called imibavu, is used to perfume butter.

At the time of the last volcanic eruption in 1912, the king had large quantities of this wood burnt to purify the air, which was tainted by sulphurous vapors.

438 The inhabitants of the Bugoyi, Mulera, Bussigi, Bgisha,
651 Bufumbiro, etc., formerly supplied this substance, as a tax under the name of umutsama (plural imitsama).

438 The people of the Kinyaga, dwellers on the shores of Lake
463 Kivu, made strong mats (ibisunyu) of lake reeds for the court.

People from the Bgishaza, Kingogo, Budaha, etc., made litters, baskets, and hampers of various shapes because they lived close to the forest where the materials essential to their craft are to be found.

463 Dressing cases, combs, butter jars, dishes; spoons, pitchers,
651 pipes, tobacco pouches, bows, arrows, shields, quivers, spear shafts, clubs, scabbards, cases for knives and drinking tubes, drums, chairs, etc., were all made by professionals who paid their taxes in this fashion.

644 In accordance with an immemorial custom, the king chose himself a wife from each of the following Hamitic clans: /458/ Bega, Basinga, Bakono, Baha, and sometimes also among the Bagessera, not to speak of those who were referred to him on account of their mental or physical qualities. He contracted matrimonial alliances with the neighboring princes of the Uswi, Karagwe, and Bunyabungu, but no son of those foreign princesses, to our knowledge, ever sat on the throne. Few royal wives managed to retain their husband's good favors indefinitely. Many of them were demoted to the rank of servants (abaja), if not sent back to their families (1).

1. This was the best they could hope for, since then they regained their complete freedom.

Some chiefs were bound by custom to send regularly to court some little girls, who were raised among the queen-mother's followers. The lot of those children was a rather unhappy one. Some of them when grown were chosen as servants or as symbolic wives offered to the spirits of dead kings (2).

2. Cf. Chapter VII below under "Funeral Rites."

[i.e., hoary, -Analyst]

644 Others were entrusted with the manufacture of baskets, hampers, mats, and other fine basketry.

Sebugrigri (deceased in 1925), the representative of the great chief Rwidegembya in the Bigogo province, had to supply annually two or three of those children, who were euphemistically known by the name of "pages" (intore) or "outgoers" (emigrants) chosen by fate (inkuke).

644 661 Nyiramurici (deceased in 1927), a Muhunde /Hunde/ from the Gishari and a close relative of the queen of that land, came to pay homage to the Hamitic prince of Ruanda. As a reward for his services as a sorcerer, he was given three villages (Gassovu, Gatoke, and Nyaruchundura) located in the Kanage, with the sole obligation of handing to the queen mother /459/ any girls he might father or obtain among his subjects (1).

[651] 1. This obligation has always been regarded as a hateful one. As a rule parents were loath to surrender their offspring and complied only under duress. Sometimes they managed to elude this exorbitant tax by giving the chief one or even several cows. The chief also took advantage of this power to tax only his enemies or to extort several head of cattle from them under this revolting pretext.

In order to gain the good graces of the king or his mother, certain families freely gave up their children, boys or girls. The lot of the adolescent boys was much preferable to that of their sisters. Once grown up, after serving for a time in the page corps, they regained their freedom and were often granted the rule of a hill as a reward for their sojourn at court.

644 727 Among the other families who played a role at court, we may cite the aBasingo, Batchaba, and aBagessera. The Basingo, a subdivision of the powerful Biru clan, fulfill a special function in wartime along with the "Cursers" (*Abahenyi*).

[787] They are in charge of "closing the path" to the enemy (*gukingir' ababisha*) by gathering all the monsters, real or fancied, who are regarded by the Blacks as evil portents and therefore designated by the term *intsiro*. This covers chiefly black goats, black chicks whose entrails were found to "turn black" when examined by the diviners, that is to say, unfavorable to the enemy, dissolute mothers (*ibinyandaro*), children born out of wedlock, children born during the mourning period held for one of their relatives (*umwana w'amabi*), young girls with undeveloped breasts (*impenebere*), old women who remained sterile through life (*umugetchuru w'igicha mbyaro*), and other true monsters with real and visible defects, who are designated by the generic name of *ibimara* or *ibimazi*.

644 342 The aBatchaba, another branch of the great /460/ aBiru family, select and measure the sites of royal huts. They hang in the interior of the hut, and later fasten outside, some branches of trees with magic properties (1) which according to popular belief exercise a salutary influence over the inhabitants or owners of the huts. It is the duty of their wives and daughters to meet the victorious warriors, singing and dancing, and thus congratulate them for their feats of valor. They also take part in the traditional celebrations which are held when the king takes official possession of a newly built hut and enters it for the first time with a wife chosen especially for the occasion (2).

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[824] 1. Among those plants or trees with magic properties, we may cite the ficus (*umuvumu*), the red-bloom erythrina (*umuko*), the plant called *irarire*, etc.

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2. Throughout Ruanda, in principle, a new hut is taken over in the name of a spirit (a dead relative) whose favors are desired.

It is also in his name that one takes a wife (*kumulongorer' abazimu*).

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[342] This is why these women are called *abaterampundu*, that is, "those who utter cries of joy."

726 The duties of the aBatchaba are often identical to those of their brothers, the aBasingo, whom they assist in bewitching the enemy with teratological beings who are driven before the hostile army. Like the aBiru they also make drums.

825 The totem of the aBagessera is the wagtail, a bird of good omen, which is consequently regarded as a member of the family.
342 Hence the power of the Bagessera to call this bird when needed. At
644 court and throughout the land, there is a custom whereby no one may enter a new hut until the wagtail has made an appearance. The bird must at least flit about or hop on the flattened ground where the hut is to be built or on the hut itself. One may even wait several days if necessary /461/ rather than risk the misfortunes which invariably befall those who do not take this traditional practice into account. At the capital, therefore, theBagessera are in charge of instigating the appearance of "their relative" (*mwene wabo*), the congenial bird, whenever a royal building is put up.

To achieve this they take some embers from their home and light a fire before the new hut.

They sit nearby and whistle in a special way to catch the attention of their totem.

825 The wagtail is highly regarded by the Banyarwanda. In story and song it is called "the bird (inyamanza) from the region of Mabera," a once famous village inhabited by the Bagessera (1). It is located

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1. The regard in which the wagtail is held is the subject of a charming tale. The wagtail

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gained a choice position among favorite birds because it once performed a very useful deed. A king whose name has been forgotten was pining for love. His courtiers did not know what to do, in spite of their numerous attempts to provide the monarch with a choice companion....

At about the same time, in a village far from the capital, a man and his wife were raising a girl of great beauty, who was nourished on cow milk.... The wagtail, who knew of the king's apathy, came and flitted about the courtyard where the young girl was dressing. The bird seized one of her main garments and flew toward the capital. Surprised, the fair maiden followed the bird, begging it to return her garment. "Do not fear," answered the bird, "I shall return it when we hear the sound of the (capital's) drums." While speaking, the winged messenger dropped some beads, of which he had brought a number. The young girl, who was fond of novelties, bent down and picked them up. Eventually they arrived at court.... At first people were surprised at such a miraculous event, but their attention was

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drawn to the beauty of the fair stranger. The king was notified. She was the girl he had been waiting for. As a reward, the wagtail was granted a permanent privilege to its species called ubulenga nzira, which included immunity and a sort of tithe to be levied upon the crops throughout the realm.

near the hill of Lwoga, not far from Nyanza, the present capital.

563 The Bagessera regard themselves as the most important Muhutu /Bahutu/ clan, and claim to be the most ancient inhabitants of Ruanda. According to them, they were the first masters of the land. /462/

Bloody Bondage Imposed on Some Families

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178 The Bakono, Banyabyinshi, and Bakunzi of the Kinyaga were for a long time the victims of this /type of bondage/.

Let us add, however, that the brutality and cruelty characteristic of those inhuman and now suppressed customs had lost some of their primitive harshness in the course of the last two reigns.

1. The expiatory debt to which the Bakono were bound for having fought Ruganzu II had been changed altogether.

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178 Upon the accession of a new king to the throne, the Bakono had to send one or two of their people to the capital, and so did another clan which had formerly belonged to the Banyabyinshi group, so often mentioned at the beginning of the great king's reign.

At court, instead of having their throats slit as was formerly done, those people were merely sprinkled with lustral water (chalk water) and driven for an instant into the hut of the spirits as though being offered in sacrifice to them. There the matter rested. Other chroniclers state that it was customary to beat them a few times with

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178 sticks so that the custom should not altogether lose its penal character.

2. Another improvement over the past has been the complete suppression during the two preceding reigns of the odious custom which prompted each new prince when he ascended the throne to send his troops into the Russokovu, between the Bugamba and Kingogo, to make war and receive their baptism of fire.

This was called "to make the king's spear drink blood" (guhir' icchumu ry' umwami).

Just as the Banyarwanda have the habit of leading their herds to the watering hole (guhir' inka) at the /463/ beginning of the day, a traditional custom also made it necessary for the king to make his spear drink blood (kunywesh' amarasso icchumu ry' umwami) upon his accession to the throne.

After killing some unfortunate people, the victorious warriors returned home.

The beginning of a reign could not be augured more auspiciously.

Ruganzu II Ndori was the first to launch such an expedition, 773 which later became traditional.

He did this to punish the killers of his father. According to one version, which has already been cited (1), old King Ndahiro was killed at Russokovo, by the Bakongoro (a segment of the great Banyabyinshi faction) who had rebelled against him and whom he had set out to subjugate.

The expedition ended in disaster. Ndahiro, so the tradition adds, died there along with many of his followers. The rebels seized the king's drums and had them burned. Only the Kalinga, or [103 palladium of the realm, escaped the conquerors. This is why the place where the defeat took place has been known since by the name

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1. Cf. Book III, Histoire du règne de Ruganzu II, /History of Ruganzu II's Reign/ /not translated/.

773 [103] of Rubi rw'inyundo, meaning "the evil of the hammer," to recall that the weapons wrought by the blacksmiths' hammers were fatal there to Ndahiro and his warriors (2).

2. There are numerous variations on this historical theme. The inhabitants of the Bugamba insist that Ruganzu II was smoked out of Kirengo Cave by the Banyabyinshi. Hence the custom, they say, of leading two of the inhabitants of the land to the capital, where they were beaten, in memory of and punishment for this misdeed. Others believe that it was Chyilima-Rugwe who was fatally injured by the Bakongoro and who, pursued by his enemies, came to die near Gasseke, where his skeleton was later found. These tragic circumstances would explain the 15 annual days of mourning in June, if the disaster was such as the chroniclers lead us to suppose.

178 643 3. Fortunate, too, is the abolition of the custom which prompted the young king to kill one of his maternal uncles (nyirarume) with his own hands, an act which was political as well as /464/ superstitious, and which often followed close on the murder of the princes who were the monarch's relatives by marriage.

The prosperity of the realm was believed to depend on the fulfillment of cruel customs.

The abolition of these barbarous practices would be wholly to the credit of the Banyarwanda were it not for the fact that in 1895, at the time when Mibambge-Rutalindwa was deposed, the victorious Bega faction then in power committed innumerable atrocities toward

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643 the vanquished that the natives sometimes relate to each other secretly and fearfully in the evening by the fire.

4. The best known of those customs is the punishment of the
178 Bachuku and Bayumbo, who are from Bukunzi land, linked to the
643 Kinyaga province.

782 The story of the misdeed which gave rise to this penalty is told in Histoire du Règne de Ruganzu II /The History of the Reign of Ruganzu II/ /Book III, not translated/.

Because the bull in one of the great king's herds had been killed, the king himself proceeded to take a blazing revenge there and then by having two young men and two young women killed in the valley called Nyakafunzo.

"My spear," cried the angered monarch, "I shall henceforth leave it among you so that you may give it children. At every change of reign, you shall surrender a young man and a young woman to expiate your misdeed." The royal envoys, therefore, would appear whenever a new king succeeded to the throne and claim their human tribute.

The young man was killed on the spot at Nyakafunzo. A dagger was plunged into his armpit. The blood was gathered into a wooden jar which was then taken into enemy country in accordance with directives from the capital.

The shedding of this cursed blood guaranteed the defeat of those inhabitants who had offended the king /465/ or who were at war with him. . The corpse of the unfortunate one was left on the spot, where the hyenas soon disposed of it. . . . As for the young woman who had to be supplied by the Bachuku, it was agreed that she should be chosen among mothers who were suckling a baby girl. Her lot was less fearsome. She was given in marriage to the Bumbogo, where she had to attend to the cultivation of sorghum and eleusine, whose "first fruits" were taken to court for the great annual festival celebrated there at that time. As a further contribution to this custom, the Bachuku also supplied the flour mill used to grind the sorghum and eleusine.

An earthen jug and the large household spoon, or spatula, (umwuko), used to make bread (umutsima) were sent along with the millstones.

178 The Blacks insist that the custom was not followed when the
643 present king ascended the throne in 1896. The bloody events which
782 took place at that time caused it to be overlooked.

It is not certain either that the Bakunzi, or people from Bukunzi, lent themselves to this custom willingly, considering its odiousness and the independence they were beginning to show in their dealings with the Hamitic king.

Privileges and Favors at Court

In the course of this work, there has been frequent mention of
661 exemptions, franchises, and immunities granted to individuals or
644 families. The reader is advised to look into Fondation du Royaume hamite /Founding of the Hamitic Kingdom/ and Histoire du Règne de Ruganzu II (History of the Reign of Ruganzu II) /Books II and III, not translated/, in order to familiarize himself with the subject.

He will find there the approximate time when those rights were granted and the reasons for their existence, and he will be surprised to encounter instances of regional autonomy.

We shall speak here only of certain favors or /466/ privileges of a special character, granted for a specific period of time or even permanently.

Elevation to noble rank falls into the second of these categories.

1. Elevation to Noble Rank

563 The Batwa, as we said earlier, are a caste despised by the
644 Bahutu as well as by the Batutsi.

554 It is regarded as a dishonor not only to contract matrimonial unions with them, but also in making them commensal. There have
565 been exceptions to this type of ostracism, however. In reviewing the past, one finds some Batwa who were raised to noble rank and placed on the same level as the Batutsi.

Others gained practical nobility in the course of time.

The best-known example is that of the Mutwa /singular of Batwa/ Busiete, to whom Yuhi III Gahindiro gave his own daughter Mulangamirwa in marriage as a reward for his devotion and services.

563 The descendants of this couple created the Basiete clan. They still
644 exercise great influence at court, and they possess numerous territories
554 (fees).

565 This event was not unprecedented, for the Hamitic kings, while maintaining the social distinctions with which we are already familiar, frequently made use of this device to reward highly deserving commoners.

This was the rule until quite recently.

Listed among the Bahutu who were admitted into the Batutsi caste and who contracted matrimonial alliances with them are the chief of the "cursers" (abahēnyi) clan, Agakwande, and the descendants of the great sorcerer Lunukamishyo. The latter form a closed clan known by the name of Abosha, and rank at court as sacrificer-diviners.

The keepers of the treasure (abanyabyuma), or abanyori, from
554 Mpanda village have likewise been raised to noble rank, and so has
565 /467/ Bunyereri, the commander of the "Invincible" (Intalindwa)
army.

The same was done to a number of foreigners from the Uswi, Bunyabungu, and other adjacent regions.

Innumerable men in the king's service (abanyagikali,
abanyanzoga, etc.) were raised by his favor to noble rank and granted
the government of some province or village. Prisoners of war who
527 had earned the confidence of their conquerors also rose to the ranks
of the Batutsi. Chief Lusera, who was carried off from the Nkole
region at a very young age in the course of an expedition, was brought
up by King Lwabugiri, who later gave him the village of Gitongati
in the Nduga and his own daughter Kalungerwa in marriage.

The Badiga clan owes its nobility to a curious event in which
173 the Hamitic kings had no direct part.

558 The ancestor of this tribe, a man named Bidiga, was of the
563 Mutwa /Batwa/ race, and his parents, Sabulegeya and Rwiru, had
come originally from the Bufundu province. They had moved to the
village of Gahogo in the Nduga. Bidiga, their son, became a potter
like his father. During a famine, on a day of torrential rain, a

173 558 563 Mututsi /Batutsi/ woman named Nyirandoba sought shelter in Bidiga's hut without being aware of his social status. The potter gallantly offered some food to the hunger-stricken lady.

Nyirandoba accepted eagerly. Meanwhile the sky had cleared and the woman, her hunger satisfied, took leave of her host after thanking him very kindly.

As she walked away, she heard a voice inviting Bidiga to take advantage of the improvement in the weather and go into the swamp to fetch some clay. Nyirandoba realized her mistake. She was forever dishonored. Everyone /468/ would know that she, a Mututsi woman, had entered the hut of a Mutwa and had taken food from the hand of a pariah.

Henceforth, no one in her own caste would be willing to associate with her.

Bidiga, who understood her uneasiness and misgivings, came to her aid and offered to marry her. The noble lady, very happy with the solution, became Bidiga's wife.

Not far from them there lived a Batutsi clan named *Babambanganzi*, who were in charge of one of the court herds known by the name of "black cows" (*inka z'imikara, inkuke z'ibgami*). Those people, who had no reasons to complain about Bidiga's proximity, made him their cowherd and put him in charge of the royal herd. Bidiga and his family gradually established close contact with the Hamites and contracted marriages with them which placed them in due course among the Batutsi ranks (1).

1. In view of all this, we can understand why the Hamitic type has lost its original purity to a greater or lesser extent in some of the clans belonging to this ethnic group. We may also add that the poorer Batutsi often take Bahutu wives.

2. Other Favors and Privileges

661 644 a. "The gift of the fire cow" (inka y' umuriro). This is when the king sends a cow to a chief who has been stripped of his property or who has been in disgrace for some time. It is tantamount to a reconciliation.

This privilege grants the man who had been ostracized or banished permission to settle definitively on granted land and to build there like anyone else.

The gift of the cow, which is a sign and proof of forgiveness, also heralds further favors.

The last two beneficiaries of royal clemency were Musinga's maternal uncles, Lukangamiheto and Luhinankiko, whose ambition and political activities had /469/ greatly displeased the queen mother and the regent Kabale, creator of the bloody Ruchunchu revolution. They regained their rank and position at court.

661 b. Entrance rights (ilembo). This favor is highly valued by those to whom it is granted. It consists of receiving, in lieu of the king, the gifts of material goods and herds which are daily offered to the prince. Hence the expression, "to proceed to or place oneself at the entrance to the Court" (kuja kw' ilembo ry'ibgami) so as to take over the gifts and cows which subjects bring to their sovereign. This is a temporary privilege that is granted only for a few days and never more than two or three months to the same individual.

[651] c. Ubulenga nzira is a sort of tithing right which the king and great chiefs grant to individuals whom they wish to reward. The holder of this right may levy a tax on the inhabitants of the territory over which the chief or king has jurisdiction. He gets cows and produce as long as the concession is not revoked.

[651 727] d. The right to levy a cow wherever one spends the night (kurar'inka) is largely granted in times of war, on the way out and on the way back.

[702] It is a good device to recruit soldiers, who greatly valued this privilege and made use of it both in friendly and in enemy territory.

e. Ubutumwa ("message"). The "right of message" grants the king's envoys the right to demand a cow from the recipient of the message. Instances are cited of men who managed to assemble fine herds thanks to their job as royal couriers.

661 f. "Those who are not looted" (abatanyagwa). This is a kind of privilege of inviolability granted by the prince to chiefs whom he takes under his special protection. He /470/ promises to help them and swears never to surrender them to their enemies.

g. "The right to secure provisions at night" (oguhaha n' ijoro) is a polite metaphor, or rather a gracious euphemism, that means that the beneficiaries of this privilege are entitled to steal freely during the night. It is said that this strange privilege was granted for the last time to the clan of the Bakoma, descendants of the petty king of Marangara, who took advantage of it to the best of their interests.

Favors of this kind were not surprising to the Blacks, who knew only too well that the goods of the subjects belonged to the king, and that by taking them (directly or through an intermediary) he was only taking what belonged to him.

Chapter 5

644 Safeguard with which the King Surrounds Himself on the Part of His Employees. Dangers to Which the Latter Were Exposed Daily. Customs and Formalities Observed by the King and His Subjects.

I. Precautions Employed by the King to Insure the Fidelity of His Servants and Employees

Not only does the king demand the most absolute devotion, but he also requires the most rigorous secrecy from most of his people. Those who must be especially careful not to risk his anger and suspicion are the cooks, table servants (abōzi, abahanga), cup bearers, the men who prepare tobacco, and those in charge of the prince's pipe (abanyaruhago).

The sacrificer-diviners and especially those who are known by the name of Abakongori or Abanyambuto because they use the

644 king's saliva in their procedures carry out their duties in the greatest
secrecy. The same applies to the official historians (abachurabgenge),
/471/ the keepers of the traditions (abiru) and the members of the
royal corporation of undertakers. No layman is permitted to have
close contact with them. In order to insure their zeal, their attach-
644 ment, and their trustworthiness, the sovereign submits them at the
695 outset to a sort of test poison (igihango), which in the minds of the
Blacks has a noxious, suspensive, and subsequent effect. To this end,
the aspirants or successors to the above-mentioned positions were
formerly led to Gihanga in the Nduga, on the banks of a famous
spring, to drink the beverage that would guarantee their future
fidelity. The officials in charge of those tests threw into the water on
the preceding day some leaves, plants, and shrub branches which
played an important role in this kind of ceremony. The horn of a bull
also had to be obtained and dipped in the water, and whenever possible
it had to come from a bull who had killed at least one person, as if
the memory of the spilled blood were henceforth to haunt the minds
of the new candidates and to fill them with terror. The performance
was carried out with great seriousness. After drinking this magic
water, the participants in the test were expressly forbidden to spit,
smoke, or drink beer during the first few days, so that the beverage
might work its effect upon them unchecked. The Blacks are indeed
very meticulous in the fulfillment of their rites and superstitions
(imihango n'imigenzo). It was believed that from that time forward,
those who had passed the test could not fall short in their official
duties. They had pledged themselves forevermore, and the least
infidelity, the least breach of duty could only entail disastrous consequences leading to the loss of their life. As in the case of the
initiates into the Ryangombe secret society, the test poison thereafter
exercised upon them a suspensive and subsequent effect.

It was a sort of Damocles' sword, ever ready to fall upon them in case of disobedience or violation of secrecy. /472/

By drinking the magic beverage, they pledged themselves implicitly to serve the king as the nature of their functions required and to maintain secrecy to outsiders about all court events.

Woe to them if they broke professional secrecy!

644 695 We have seen that in order to preserve the supernatural properties of the beverage (igihango) the candidates were forbidden to smoke, drink, or spit. What were they to do in order to avoid the disastrous effects that the test poison, according to popular belief, might have upon their health?

Accustomed as primitives are to the strangest and most incredible things, the Banyarwanda believed that in order to avert any danger in this connection, all they had to do was to commit a shameful act immediately.

As a result of this belief and in the thought that they were being helpful to the neophytes, their relatives led them away, outside the clan, along with some friends. They lay in wait and seized [839] a young man or a young girl, depending on the sex of the candidate, and did violence to the young person.

It must be added that the Blacks, knowing the distaste of Europeans for such sport, have not dared to fulfill the last part of the [178] program since the arrival of the Whites.

II. Dangers to Which Dignitaries, Employees, and Favorites at Court Were Exposed at All Times

644 661 It may be said that until recent years the secret of certain customs and traditions had been well preserved, for fear of the effects of the test poison and for fear of the king, who would not hesitate to punish delinquents at the first sign of indiscretion. It is equally true that until our time the majority of servants /473/ and underlings lived under the risk and perpetual threat of a violent death which might claim them at any moment. The monarch, who did not rely exclusively on the effectiveness of the test poison and probably had very good reasons not to do so, unfortunately made use quite often of his prerogatives as sovereign and his discretionary power over all things to apply extravagant punishments. Nothing counted in his eyes except his own interests, his whims and his passions. He frequently gave free rein to the latter. A mere suspicion or even less was sufficient to cause the merciless death of an unfortunate individual.

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Some examples will clarify the preceding statements. We may add that they were the last in this bloody serial, and that such things could not happen at the present time.

The most vulnerable servants were unquestionably those who were assigned to the king's kitchens or to the service of his meals, as well as those who were in charge of watching over his beer and milk and those who prepared his tobacco. So as not to extend the necrological list out of all proportion, since the other employees were far from being safe, we shall speak here only of victims belonging to the above-mentioned categories of servants.

Kiryana (from the word kurya, "to eat"), or the "House that devours" its inhabitants, such is the portentous name given to the hut where the bowls of milk reserved for the prince are kept.

Two or three keepers are assigned to this duty, which consists of cleaning the bowls, receiving the milk brought by the chiefs, and presenting it to the king once a day.

Of all vocations this is the most feared and the least envied. Numerous have been its victims, and numerous also those who ran far away to neighboring lands in order to avoid this dangerous honor.

This is why it was always assigned by force. It may be said that /474/ few of those men left their duties without having paid with their lives. The sovereigns, who also lived under a perpetual fear of poisoning and bewitchment and who were not in the least miserly about the blood of their subjects since it counted for so little in their eyes, did not hesitate to nurture a salutary fear in their entourage by striking blindly into the ranks of their servants. Those who fell served as examples to those who remained. It was a matter of inspiring terror and instigation their zeal. Thanks to his high intelligence and to his diviners and sorcerers, the king was believed to know everything which might be plotted in secret against him.

Some Concrete Instances

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A young man had been attached to this particular service /milk hut/ for about 15 years. Many a time his sovereign had assured him that he was satisfied with his services and that nothing would ever happen to him.

644 His assistants and colleagies kept vanishing, almost invariably
661 struck by the bloody fate which clung to them and to their position.
696 He alone remained untouched. To bind him closer the king plied him with gifts of goods and cattle.

Whenever an anxious thought disturbed his heart, he would think about all the things he possessed, about the royal favor, and about all that he could still expect. There came a time when the queen mother, influenced by rivals and envious men, began to persecute him. No matter how much our man defended himself, calling upon the guarantee he had offered by drinking the test poison and expressing in a most touching fashion the feelings of loyalty which he nurtured toward the royal family, the suspicions which rested upon him merely grew. The queen mother, who always held a sword in her hand, soon came to thrusts with it. While our unfortunate man was fulfilling his duties toward the king and /475/ serving him some drink, he felt the point of the sword graze his body many times. "Traitor, poisoner, son of a dog" (umwana w'imbga), such were the epithets that greeted his appearance. The prince at first seemed to defend him. He even told him privately that he did not believe the calumnies circulated against him, that everything would be all right, that his enemies would be exposed, and that the queen mother would eventually trust him once more.

The days went by, the animosity of the mother did not decrease, and now the king intervened only for the sake of appearances.

One evening, at nightfall, the unfortunate occupant of the "hut that devours" felt himself seized by strong arms.

Alone and taken by surprise, he did not put up any resistance. He was led to another hut.

He was laid upon the ground, firmly bound, and his hands tied behind his back. He vainly appealed to the mercy of his jailers, swearing his innocence.

They retorted that they were merely carrying out royal orders, and that their own life was at stake.

This the prisoner could well understand. Soon he was left to himself and to his own thoughts. Constrained tightly by his bonds, unable to move, and troubled about the fate that awaited him, the

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unfortunate man grieved. He was prey to the most bitter thoughts when three lugubrious shadows surged forward into his prison from the midst of darkness and came toward him.... It must have been about eight o'clock. Two sticks grazed his neck as though to grip him in a vice. He was going to be strangled. In a convulsion of despair, the man who was about to die managed to break the bonds which held his hands and arms. In a flash he grasped both sticks by one end and set up fierce resistance against the efforts of those who wished to kill him, while emitting heart-rending cries, shouting for help, and proclaiming his innocence to the surrounding echoes. The huge agglomeration of /476/ royal huts resounded with the screams of this man who held on to life desperately.... No one could fail to know what was going on.

People were familiar with those shrill, heart-rending wails, which had pierced the air more than once. Everyone's heart tightened with emotion, but each person, in fear of the master or the envious men, maintained an impassive or scoffing expression as befits those who live in uncertainty about the future.

The victim struggled violently against his opponents, who could not manage to relax his hold. While two of the executioners attempted to free the sticks by beating him on the head and chest and kicking him, the third one rolled the victim, who was lying on the ground, in the opposite direction. The executioners, who were doing this work for the first time and had never yet killed anyone and who realized the odiousness of their task, trembled all over before the despair of the unfortunate man who had been surrendered to them.

The fight for life was reaching its climax, but it was obvious that victory would eventually rest with the group of opponents, who were able to move freely. Chance, or rather Divine Providence, willed it that a European who was passing through the capital should be with the king at that very moment.

Hearing the desperate cries that arose within the royal enclosure, the white man was moved and spoke heatedly to the prince.... The latter, feigning surprise and astonishment, hastened to the courtyard whence the cries rose, checked the stranglers, and returned forthwith to reassure his interlocutor.

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The man who was about to depart this life, exhausted by his efforts, had almost lost consciousness when he heard himself called by a voice which pretended to be compassionate. It was the king himself, feigning pity. He gave his ex-favorite some beer to drink, had him set on his feet, and asked him to follow, promising /477/ to release him. He had never believed in his guilt, he added, and therefore would soon restore his freedom. His goods would be returned to him, and he would resume his functions at court.

It was only a matter of a couple of hours. The poor captive, staggering at each step under the grip of emotion and weakness, was led to a sort of brick building used as a prison. The door was closed upon him.

He found there a fellow captive who sympathized with his misfortune. More fortunate than he, the other man received food and pombe from the outside, which he shared forthwith. The prisoner, who felt that his last hour had come, regained some courage and the strength needed to undertake a new fight for life.

The honeyed words of the king had not fooled him. He knew that the matter had merely been postponed and that soon he would be fetched again. His companion, who was familiar with the mores of the capital, made no attempt to contradict him. Fearing nothing for himself because he was a noble and too well known to be dispatched secretly, he was full of pity for the man who was about to die. Certain of his fellow-prisoner's trustworthiness and encouraged by his advice, the unfortunate servant tried to shake the door open and weighed upon it with all his might. Nothing could be achieved there, however, for it was shut tight. His efforts were in vain. The planks were nailed solidly and resisted his blows and the pressure of his knees. Time was short, however, for the executioners could arrive at any moment.

The prisoner, in whom the desire to live was stronger than the death which threatened him, managed to climb the dry-brick wall by using his feet and hands. The building was several years old, and the soil which had been used as mortar had disintegrated in the course of time, offering occasional holds to fingers and nails actuated /478/ by an iron will. The head of the climber reached the thatch roof.

644 661 696 The man quickly broke through the wood and bamboo of the framework. He was just in time. The door of the prison opened at the same moment, and the executioners came in to seize the condemned man. The latter took off and hurled himself into space. The wall was fortunately of moderate height. The fugitive nevertheless sprained himself slightly in falling upon his feet. Not having had time for thought, he had merely obeyed the instinct for self-preservation. The imminence of danger lent him wings, for his leap had drawn the attention of those who vainly sought him inside.

The alarm was sounded, and the fugitive pursued. He did not lose his head, however. Instead of risking capture, which was bound to result if he placed all his trust in flight, our man, who had some headway over his pursuers, hid in the capital itself at the home of a friend he trusted completely. It was to be expected that searches would be made in the huts. In order to avert this new danger, one of the long baskets used to store beans inside the huts was readied to provide the fugitive with a foolproof hiding place.

For further safety his head was covered with beans which allowed him to breathe sideways but which were sure to defeat the searchers' quest. All inspections and investigations among the inhabitants were in vain. When vigilance had relaxed a little, the lucky fugitive took advantage one evening of the shades of night to leave forever that tragic place which had nearly become his grave. His flight was discovered some time later. Under directives from higher sources, the local chief had the hut surrounded. Its owner managed to escape in time.

The affair had become known, and furthermore the country had come increasingly under the sway of European administration. The latter /479/ heard of the matter. A trial took place which did not turn out in favor of the persecutors.

As a result, the fugitive was not disturbed again.

Many years have passed since this moving episode. The memory of those frightful events has nevertheless remained painful to the hero of the tragedy, who does not like to recall the past. The stubborn scars which cross his face, chest, and arms corroborate the seriousness of the episode that nearly killed him. He has met

644 since more than once with his neophyte executioners, who did not
661 fail to congratulate him with some embarrassment while apologizing
696 for the odious task which had been entrusted to them. "Some luck thou had!" they already told him (wagiz' Imana). "What an ugly business the king had entrusted to us!"

"Good for thee, if you managed to get out of such a tight corner." A little later he was even presented to the king, who was first taken aback. He recovered himself quickly and congratulated him in turn. "It was God who saved you (N'Imana yagukijije)," he added. In gratitude to God, Who had rescued him from such a diffi-
[553] cult situation, the lucky fugitive changed his name from Ngirimandwa ("The spirits of the initiates are on my side") to Ngirimana, which means "I have God (on my side)."

After a whole string of circumstances, all equally eventful and dramatic, the outcome had finally turned out in Ngirimandwa's favor.

For one fugitive who was able to narrate in detail the vicissitudes of the drama that nearly killed him, however, how many unfortunate ones vanished into the fatal den without a trace!

Now that the times have changed, elders whose lips were formerly sealed by the rule of secrecy and by the fear of corporal punishment, freely mention the names of unfortunate executed men they knew. They recall among many others a young man who had been a page. /480/ His intelligence, ability, and liveliness had drawn the notice of the sovereign to him, who made him his favorite and could not do without him. As in the previous case the years went by and the prince's favor was transferred elsewhere.

[539] "A king's friendship, a day's friendship," says the proverb.

He had been practically forsaken and was hardly noticed anymore, when one day he was requested to work in the famous "bloody hut."

What had he done that his fate should be so irreparably settled? That is practically unknown.

About eight days after he had received his new job, he was summoned in great haste as though for some pressing errand. It was

644 the queen mother who had called him. She wanted news of a court
661 lady who had just given birth.

696 This woman lived a short distance from the capital. Night fell. The messenger set out on his way. He was accompanied by a chief and by a factotum.

They reached the edge of a swamp of sinister fame where summary executions were formerly performed.

The young man, guiltless and carefree, walked in front. He was struck from behind. . . and has never been heard of since.

Another occupant of the hut with the portentous name, just as peaceable as the preceding one but older, was brutally seized in turn when he least expected it, after being designated by the diviners' bones. . . . First he managed to run away and hide at a friend's house. When he attempted to return to his own village, however, he was recognized and captured along the way by a chief who led him back to the capital. He was tossed into prison where he was joined during the night by sinister-looking men. They held in their hands large milk jars which they used to crush his jaw and face. The prisoner, tightly bound as the Blacks know how to do, was stretched upon the ground /481/ and unable to make the least motion. Kicks and blows fell thick and fast upon the chest and stomach of the unfortunate man whose body soon became a single wound.

He was finished off by strangulation. .

Several groups of young girls were also killed, some under the fallacious pretext of having poisoned the tobacco they prepared, others for having stolen bead necklaces. The latter, after they had confessed, were first thrown into prison. A day or two later, they were taken out and led to the queen mother, who feigned reconciliation and pardon and received them with great displays of joy. Hydromel was served to them in large quantities. A deep sleep took hold of them. Then the executioner came and strangled them. . . .

687 In order to give an idea of the frequency of executions and
696 variety of corporal punishments, we shall give here a sort of
644 necrological list that includes the names of the victims and the circumstances of their death.

681 This list, which is incomplete, covers a period of some 20
696 years just before the Europeans took possession officially.
644 We list these data, of course, without vouching for their accuracy. We cannot guarantee the authenticity of every victim, and still less that of the details of the executions. We can only relate popular reports that are sometimes or even frequently suspect in their statements and evaluations.

Victims of the "Milk House"

1. Lwandenzi, of Mututsi /Batutsi/ race, originally from the Bgana-Chambge, was led into the Bugessera forest.

His executioners tied him to a tree and cut off his feet (kumusongor' ibirenge). /482/

2. Lutindamateme, an Umututsi from the village of Ntenyo (Nduga), was first bound, then killed with a spear thrust and thrown into the Ruboneye swamp.

3. Lwanyonga, a Mututsi, died in the same way at the the same time as the preceding man.

His corpse was cut into pieces by sorcerers, who wanted to hinder his spirit from harming the king.

4. Minega, son of a certain Bushakiro, a Mututsi from Mwendo (Nduga), had his throat slit in the Bugessera forest.

5. Gahima, son of Nyarwambari, a Mututsi from Gassaka (near Gisseke), was clubbed to death in the inner courtyard of the palace.

6. Munyagishari, a Mututsi, was killed with spear thrusts and thrown into the Ruboneye swamp.

7. Gakwise, of Muhutu /Bahutu/ race, suffered the same fate.

8. Karara, a Muhutu, died the same death.

9. Ntagwabira, a Muhutu, died like the preceding.

10. Ibingira, a Mututsi, also died in the same manner.

11. Butama, a Muhutu, was clubbed to death.

12. Majanjo, a Mututsi, strangled himself in prison to escape the corporal punishment which awaited him.

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196 13. Kajigiri, a Mututsi from the Gissaka country, was first bound. His executioners lifted him several times and dropped him on his head. He was finished off with club blows.

14. Lwamiheto was given numerous blows by club. He was released almost immediately and died three months later of the brutalities he had suffered, according to public opinion.

15. Kayonga and his son, after many vicissitudes, were slain with spear thrusts and thrown into the Ruboneye swamp.

Victims on Other Counts

1. Bigutu and Balikage, the latter a son of Bisango and chief of the Bgishaza provinces, were killed while the court was settled at Kamonyi, after having been accused of opposing the new regime. /483/

2. The great Mututsi /Batutsi/ chief Lutishereka, his sons, and some of his followers had their throats cut while the court sojourned at Mukingo. This was done at the instigation of Luhinankiko, who blamed that high dignitary for inciting one of Lwabugiri's sons to murder his friend Baryinyonza.

3. Serukenyinkware, from the Mututsi /Batutsi/ clan of the Bachumbi, was accused of the same crime. He was cut to pieces while the court was staying at Mwima.

[685] 4. Three employees of the court, at Nyanza, were caught killing a cow which they had stolen from the king.

They were condemned to death by spearing, and they made it a point of honor not to utter the slightest cry of pain.

5. A young Mututsi, after being bound and beaten with rods all through the day, was dragged still alive by the feet, into the swamp, where he was finished off by the Batwa.

[683] 6. Two inhabitants of the village of Musumba (Nduga), named Lukesha and Lugingabahizi, had their hands and feet cut off for a crime of bewitchment. The two poor devils were held responsible because Lwibishenga, a brother of the queen mother, had almost lost his sight as a result of yaws.

7. Two Bahutu were shot point blank in the palace courtyard for a crime of espionage.

681 696 644 8. A slave (umuja) was struck down along the road at night after she had been advised to leave court and seek her fortune elsewhere. She was punished for not having watched closely enough over the moral behavior of two young princesses of royal blood.

9. Luhinankiko, a son of Queen Mother Nyirayuhi, was stripped of his property for having had Lutishereka killed. He even had to flee to Urundi, where he spent some 15 years.

Since Kabale, the regent, could not take his revenge upon him as he would have wished, he turned upon his friends and followers. /484/

Chaka, who was Luhinankiko's son-in-law, and Sebuharara and Rulinda, who were his protegés, were attacked in the Buganza by the men of the powerful minister. Defeated and unable to flee, they shut themselves up in a hut, set fire to it, and perished in the flames.

Kaningo, who belonged to their faction, was stripped of his property. On the point of being caught and knowing what awaited him at the capital, he also burned himself in his hut.

[683] 10. The Banyarwanda still remember the corporal punishment inflicted upon the six "poisoners" (1) led to Nyanza by chief Kanuma.

1. This is how the individuals suspected of the alleged crime of bewitching are designated.

These unfortunate persons had their hands and feet cut off.

11. Nyantanyi, son of Semakamba, as surrendered by Musinga to Gashamura, son of Lukagirashamba. Lwamwa, one of the latter's sons, had been killed at Ndolandi, a land he wished to conquer, by Nyantanyi's men. His relatives, the Batsobe, complained to the king, who gave them satisfaction by handing the local chief over to them.

Nyantanyi was bound and led outside the palace by Gashamura and his followers. Lwamwa's son stabbed him first in the side with a spear, and almost immediately 20 or 30 spear thrusts laid him low. [628] His head and right hand were cut off to be shown to the other followers, as was done in vendettas. One detail is to be noted: Gashamura was Nyantanyi's uncle by marriage and his father-in-law.

644 Sentashonga, the victim's cousin, was granted permission that
681 evening to have the corpse of his relative buried.

696 The elders and former habitués of the court do not lack for
[521] narratives of this kind, which they relate like any other tale without seeming overly shocked by them. Such is the environment, such are the mores and attitudes. /485/

643 "The king is the master," they say. "He does as he pleases.
661 The decisions he makes cannot be contested. He is the supreme judge. One can only obey and assent." The victims' relatives were sometimes the first to come and greet him, feigning total impassiveness, forced as they were to drive back to the bottom of their hearts the bitter pain which they could not but feel.

Complaints, wails, and recriminations could only have stirred up the anger of the king and given rise to new slaughters.

While looking after his own safety, every person also had to keep in mind that of his people /relatives and friends/. The latter, indeed, might be held responsible for the deeds and actions, no matter how harmless, of any of their fellow members. The extermination of a whole family formerly weighed very little on the scale of royal justice.

So as not to provoke trouble which might prove fatal, therefore, they put a good face on misfortune. These executed, however innocent they might have been, were claimed in loud voices to have
[687] been cursed men (ibichibga) or rebels. To shed tears or express one's sorrow were crimes of high treason. "A mere whim of the master was sufficient to send a person to punishment. What won't one do to avoid so cruel a fate?" This statement made by a court favorite of the previous reign /avant-règne/ reveals a great deal about the mores of the time. "If the king happened to sprain his foot," added the same man, "to knock against some obstacle or pebble, it was not a good idea to meet with him at that moment."

In his anger the monarch might accuse anyone of having bewitched him, and wreak then and there a signal vengeance.

Professional executioners were not always used for this purpose.
[696] The king might call upon any member of his retinue to carry out the task. The person had to comply, no matter how revolted he might

643 be /486/ by this dreadful assignment. Hands unpracticed in dealing
661 death might sometimes fumble, but the master was watching and
686 the task had to be carried through. The fact of being a friend of the
victim did not exempt anyone from this odious task.

As a rule and with some rare exceptions, it may be said that the subjects were not inordinately appalled by such assignments, so much was this an accepted custom of the times.

186 This did not prevent the Banyarwanda from regarding themselves as superior to other Blacks, whom they thought to surpass in intelligence and civilization. Despite the stains and stigmas of the past, they reject with irritation the term Shenzi, which is applied exclusively to noncivilized groups, as not applying in any way to them or to their ancestors. It is good to close the tale of these cruel practices and to feel that the curtain of time has been drawn forever over the past.

III. Poisoning and Bewitching: The Use of Charms and Philters

754 What should we really believe about those victims whose death is attributed to bewitchment or poisoning? The Blacks unquestionably mention this constantly. Their credulity in this connection is universal and extraordinary.

Numerous examples are cited of deaths which are said to have resulted from one or the other of those alleged causes.

We may add that the natives are familiar with numerous methods for bewitching their enemies, and that sorcerers in this evil category, both male and female, are found in great numbers throughout the country. One thing is certain: their superlative reputation is worse than their deeds.

As for crimes of poisoning, one may rest assured that such attempts were made and that toxic materials were used to this end, some of which were extracted locally and others purchased in neighboring regions such as /487/ the Uswi and Bunyabungu. How effective were those poisons? This is not easy to determine since, on the one hand, a true case of poisoning has never actually been witnessed, although the Blacks are absolutely convinced that they do occur

754 and cite numerous examples to this effect. On the other hand, the ingredients used in their manufacture are not yet sufficiently known.

754 278 At best, one hears popular rumors of snakes, toads, human cadavers (imirundi y' abapfuye, n' ingobyi z' abana), crocodiles, etc., whose putrefied flesh was used. The Blacks are also convinced that the lungs of tuberculars are used to transmit the disease to other [164] people (1).

[578] 1. This illness is widespread among the Batutsi, who greatly fear it.

They know full well that it is fatal. Hence their great curse, "May you die of tuberculosis!" (uragichwa n' igituntu).

According to popular belief, those lungs are dried out and crushed to powder so as to be slipped more easily into the drinking tube which is used to drink native beer. Menstrual blood (irungu), [841] which inspires in them an intense fear and an acute aversion, is popularly believed to cause slow poisoning when administered to an enemy. It is mixed in with his food secretly. There is also mention of poisonous juices, such as the milk of various kinds of euphorbia [824 847] (imiyenzi, imiduha, etc.) and of certain other plants, for example, muhoko, which is also used to induce abortions. Cactus milk and muhoko juice could only induce death in such quantities that the person involved would not fail to detect them while drinking. It is difficult, therefore, to make frequent use of those substances.

278 824 The Banyarwanda also regard as toxic /488/ the following plants: urwizilinga, umutambasha, and igisura. As we mentioned earlier, urwizilinga is a shrub somewhat similar to datura. It is the plant whose juice or powdered bark is used in trials by ordeal. The umutambasha is another shrub whose leaves are crushed to extract [524] the juice. The Banyarwanda use it to kill rats by mixing it with the food that is used as bait for those rodents.

278 Igisura belongs to the Urticaceae family.

824 This plant grows to a height of about 1.50 meters. Sufferers from yaws drink its juice as a remedy. They must be careful not to take too heavy a dose, so as not to risk a serious intoxication.

It is rumored that ill-disposed people have used one or another of those plants, and in particular the mutambasha, or rat poison, to wreak their vengeance and do away with their enemies.

754 Small packets of herbs were found in the possession of people
609 suspected of practicing the poisoner's vocation.

For what purpose had those plants been gathered? Perhaps the sorcerer had tried to lend them a harmfulness which of themselves they did not possess. Backbiters in the land insist that once at least royal hands mixed those allegedly noxious substances into milk, honey, and butter intended for Europeans who were passing through. The said person achieved no results, however, and this led him /or her/ to say that it was impossible to get rid of the Whites, that poisons, spells, and bewitchment had no hold over them. We are inclined to believe that in this case charms and philters were involved rather than noxious substances.

754 It is said that the penultimate king of the Uswi, Gasusuro,
178 one of the regular suppliers of such products, replied to the court envoys one fine day when they came to fetch the goods that henceforth he would not supply them, that he was through with all poisons. It is also quite /489/ possible that his answer was dictated by the fear of being caught practicing this vocation. Let us add for the sake of truthfulness that the days are long since past when such things could be said or plotted against Europeans (1).

(1) The Blacks live in the almost constant fear of bewitchment and poisoning.

[761] Rickets, tuberculosis, and sudden or strange deaths, especially when the corpse swells up immediately, could have no other cause in their opinion.

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How many unfortunate people payed with their lives for having been falsely accused of such supposed misdeeds!

789 648 The use of charms to win the good graces of Europeans survived only by a few years the use of the above-mentioned poisons. When the latter were tagged as ineffective /to Europeans/, or at least dangerous in their consequences, charms (inzaratsi) were resorted to. The makers of charms, called by the generic name of Abanyamihango, "men of the traditions," exercise a vocation which is regarded as lucrative and honorable as long as the professionals do not overstep the limits of their art.

Public opinion indeed accuses them, most probably wrongly, of deceiving people and giving them poison instead of inoffensive charms. 832 278 Women, especially, resort to their art and use their powders to draw upon themselves the attention and favors of an unfaithful or forgetful husband. Sorcerers in this category use for this purpose [824] the following plants and shrubs: umukunde, which bears the evocative name of "tree of love," umutanga, umugobora, umukeri, a kind of wild bramble, nkurimonga, umuhire, buryoher' imfizi, that is, "the plant that suits the taste of bulls," etc. The makers of philters take the bark, leaves, or roots of those plants and dry them in the sun. The whole thing is crushed and reduced to powder. One need only put a little of this powder into beer or butter, or else /490/ rub it onto a stick or spear, to obtain the desired effect. The neglected wife who manages to make her husband drink this beer will inevitably regain [302] first place in his heart. The result is the same if the husband anoints his limbs and body with the butter containing the precious powder.

789 648 The use of a walking stick or the bearing of a spear rubbed with one of those powders will bring good luck to the owner. His words and requests will all be accepted, and those he addresses will be unable to do him any harm.

This is why the king and court dignitaries attempted in their turn to use this simple and effective means of winning over the hearts of the Europeans and of swaying them toward their own needs and

789 648 desires. At the beginning of his relations with the Whites, Musinga often appeared with a small stick in his hand, the tip of which he would first turn toward himself as he spoke and then toward his interlocutors, in order to influence their answers. This stick was called by the name of uruchubyo, from the word guchubya, which describes the act of driving boiling water back into the pot with a stick of that name. The Blacks saw a certain similarity between the two occurrences. Just as cooks and their helpers keep the liquid from running over by forcing it back to the bottom of the pot, he who possesses a magic stick wards off the evil which his interlocutors might perpetrate upon him (ngo atsind' amagambo mabi). A happy and inoffensive credulity, which does harm to no one!

IV. Customs and Formalities Observed by the King and His Subjects

644 The relations between subjects and sovereign are permeated with a profound respect which is both superstitious and actuated by fear. The Banyarwanda formerly experienced /491/ no feelings toward their monarch other than reverential fear. The stateliness which surrounded the king and the bloody executions which confirmed his absolute power over all things had no small part in the preservation of these feelings, which were closely bound with an attitude of servility. The monarch was a true demigod far superior to other men, hence the following customs and formalities which governed the relations between subjects and sovereign.

1. The king is awakened by drums which are first played at four or five o'clock in the morning. Actually, he does not rise before seven thirty or eight o'clock. At the moment when he leaves his bed, women come and grind a handful of sorghum or eleusine, while a young girl shakes the large gourd (igisabo) which is used for churning.

The aim of these observances is to draw upon the king and the realm the prosperity symbolized by the sorghum, eleusine, and butter. The Impara, or group of initiates into the Ryangombe secret society, then make their appearance.

644 [534] Swinging their grotesque headdress to the right and to the left, they come in dancing and singing, sounding the bells and sistra which they hold in their hands.

They call upon Ryangombe and other dead initiates to bestow their protection upon the sovereign.

195 644 192 2. In order to speak of the king and of his most trivial and frequent actions, custom demands that colorful and noble terms be used, such as for example the following: kubikirwa or kwisasira instead of kuryama, which means "to go to bed."

igisasiro	for	uburiri	"royal bed"
kubamburwa	for	kubyuka	"to get up"
kuj' ijabiro	for	kuboneka	"to appear"
inyundo	for	amaguru	"legs"
ingoro	for	inzu	"house" /492/
ingoro irakamwa	for	inzu irava	"it rains in the hut"
ingoro irahonjoka	for	inzu iragwa	"the hut is falling to pieces with age" (1)

1. Kubikirwa comes from the word kubika, "to put away an object," "to put it in its proper place"; kwisasira means "to spread out the mats on the ground"; igisasiro, "the place where the mats are spread out"; kubamburwa, "to be awake"; kuj' ijabiro, "to go to that part of the hut where one talks to guests"; inyundo, "iron hammer"; ingoro, "palace"; ingoro irakamwa, "the palace is milked," to mean that it rains in there; ingor' irahonjoka, "the palace grows fat" (that is, it swells), because it is falling to pieces with age.

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Figurative terms are used to speak of the king's death:

gutabara	"to go to the aid," "to go to war"
gutanga	"to hand over" (the drum to the successor)
kunywa	"to drink" (poison)
gussaza	"to grow old"
gusezera	"to take leave"
ijuru ryaguye	"the sky has fallen"

644 3. It would be most disrespectful to allude to anything pertaining to his eventual death. While on a trip the king must avoid passing too close to cemeteries or even to the mere "night stops" (ilaro, amalaro), where the bodies of his predecessors were laid in the course of their transfer to the royal necropolises.

[767] Nor is he permitted to spend the night in those villages which are inhabited by the undertakers.

The latter in turn must avoid appearing in his presence and must employ an intermediary when they have to deal with the king.

As if the thought, likeness, or memory of death could shorten his days or bring misfortune upon him!

4. Whenever possible His Majesty must avoid bending his knees (guhina), so as not to risk a reduction in the area of his kingdom (2). /493/

[821] 2. When caught by a storm or bad weather the king must not quicken his pace; he must proceed quietly to shelter. Rain is regarded as a blessing due to the influence of the prince. A quickening of his pace might bring the beneficial downpour to an end.

We believe that this popular belief will soon be pushed into the background, and that the monarch will become less willing to submit to all the demands of his position.

644 5. In certain cases and where certain objects are concerned, the king must help himself directly. When he wishes to play the drum, as he is wont to do, his followers set the sticks on the ground before him instead of offering them to him spontaneously. The prince picks them up himself.

To hand them over to him, which to us seems so simple, might cause him to die (gukenya).

644 272 [415] 6. It is for the same reason that the servants entrusted with keeping the milk in the famous "hut that devours its inhabitants" (ikiryana) observe the same custom. Two or three large bowls full of milk are brought into the hut where the king is served. They are carefully closed with a lid woven of vegetable fiber.

Small wooden vessels known by the name of ichyantsi (plural ibyantsi) are laid before His Majesty. Whether there are two, four, or even eight of them, they must be immaculately clean. The servant fills a first container, which the king picks up himself without any help.

If the milk pleases him he goes on drinking, but he is careful not to finish it.

He must leave half of it, lest milk become scarce (ngw'amata atagabanuka) in the realm. Meanwhile, the servant fills another vessel, which the king picks up himself as he did the first one.

The first one is filled again. This table service continues until the king's hunger is satisfied.

644 7. Custom demands that when appearing at court one should clap one's hands three times (gukom'amashi) and use the customary formulas, with the sole addition of "king" (umwami) or "Sire" (Nyagasani). This is about the only external mark of respect reserved for the sovereign. /494/

644 293 412 778 8. At night the king must never be without the native hammer called Nyarushara. This tool goes with him on all his journeys.

It is left under the fine grass which serves as the monarch's bolster and pillow (barayisegurir' umwami).

It is a sort of ancient talisman which theoretically has not yet lost any of its mystic power. It was wrought according to the specifications of Mashira, the sorcerer-petty king, by an able

644 blacksmith, Gihu, son of Muhinda, on the hill of Mpanda (*mu Buhigiro,*
293 *i Kizibaziba*) in the Nduga. This was done to enable the Hamitic
412 king with whom this autochthonous prince had concluded an alliance
778 to turn back the Banyoro who had invaded Ruanda. The hammer,
which is octogonal in shape (*imigong' umunane*), symbolized an all-powerful symbolic being. The artisan, on Mashira's specifications, had wrought two breasts upon it (1). Mutabazi, the monarch's son, only had to sit down and hold upon his knees the "dreadful" magic device, pointed facing the enemy, for the latter to be hewed to pieces.

Two other small hammers with the same origin and which played the same role are laid beside the *Nyarushara*. They are known by the name of *ubushingo* or *abagaragu bayo*, that is to say, its "companions." Every morning at about nine, when the drum called *Ndamutsa* ("I greet") is played to proclaim the rising and appearance of the monarch, the latter must touch the talisman hammer as if the day's luck depended upon it.

9. *Inyundo ya Barenge*, "the hammer of the Barenge people."

It is not known exactly why the hammer thus named is kept at court. /495/

Does it really belong to the Barenge, who lived in the country several centuries ago? This is hard to say. Since it is very heavy and weighs two or three times as much as an ordinary hammer, the king's laborers sometimes use it as a mallet to drive stakes (*imiganda*) into rocky ground (1).

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1. Such details demonstrate the importance attached to this fearsome mystic weapon. Nothing has been forgotten concerning the circumstances of its manufacture, the date, the place, the artisan, the man who inspired the project, etc.

773 1. The existence of stones shaped like hammers has given rise to several tales.

The Banyarwanda formerly believed that the vault of heaven was a sort of rocky crust (urutare).

This is why in the legend of Kigwa they explain the fall of the first Hamitic king and his settlement in Ruanda in the following way. "Kigwa," they say, "being in the sky, wished to know what there was in the land below.

"Taking a hammer, he dealt repeated blows to the celestial vault. A small opening was made and the hammer fell out of his hand and down to the Mulera, at the spot called Gifuna. He attempted to enlarge the hole with a second hammer. He struck with such violence that the vault caved in under him. Kigwa fell from the sky but arose safe and sound in the sacred land of the Buhanga on the Muko plain.

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778 The hammer sank into the ground near Ntenyo, at the place called Nyundo ("hammer").

"This one may still be seen," add the Blacks. A stone lies at that spot which looks from afar like a native hammer.

The natives lavish upon it a superstitious worship mingled with fear. No one may touch it. Should a sacrilegious hand attempt

773 to move it, according to local
[778] belief, hail would soon avenge
this insult to the sacred tool.

The same legend adds that Kigwa's mother immediately bent over the hole to see what had become of her son. The ornamental headdress (urugore) which she wore broke loose and remained suspended in mid-air.

It is believed that this orna-
[821] ment (originally made of a large
sorghum stalk) was the origin of
the moon!....

644 10. The pomp that surrounds the king on his journeys. Cus-
484 toms observed on such occasions.

614 In the course of their journeys through the provinces of the
619 realm, Hamitic princes must, in accordance with a centuries-old
tradition, stay whenever possible with the Bagessera.

[825] It will be recalled that the latter's totem is the wagtail, and
that a Munyarwanda /Banyarwanda/, Mututsi /Batutsi/, or Muhutu /Bahutu/ may not enter a newly built dwelling before the bird has been over the hut or in its immediate vicinity. /496/

According to popular belief, the Bagessera have the privilege of establishing contact with this bird of good omen. The Blacks request members of this clan to use their special ability to attract the wagtail.

The king calls upon them, as does the least of his subjects. It may be on account of this role played by the Bagessera that the sovereign chooses their villages to spend the night.

Another reason why the monarch prefers to stay among them possibly derives from the regard accorded to the members of this tribe, which is believed to be the oldest in Ruanda. They lent their name to the province called Bugessera, where all Bagessera claim to have originated.

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619 In addition, they are the born protectors selected by the Hamitic princes to ward off the bad luck which threatens them in certain circumstances. The Banyarwanda, indeed, have mystic defenders of this sort who are chosen among the members of a tribe alien to theirs.

Those individuals are believed to have the power to ward off the imaginary dangers which threaten human beings. They are called abase (singular umuse). The Banyarwanda call upon their omnipotence at times of death (1), a loss of fortune, the plundering of a herd, the building of a hut, the giving of a name to a child, his teething, the celebration of a marriage, etc.

Since the Bagessera are the protectors of the Hamitic princes, it is understandable that the monarchs should seek their hospitality.

If there are no members of that family /in the locality/, the king stays with the Bazigaba, whose ancestor Kazigaba was the /497/ brother of Kagessera, founder of the Bagessera clan. If neither are to be found in the area through which the monarch is traveling, the latter resorts, in this order, to the Banyiginya, the Bega, or lastly, the Bakono.

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481 While traveling, the king is accompanied by an honor guard of Batutsi, Bahutu, and Batwa, who sleep around the royal hut at night.

[533] Five or six drummers walk at the head of the procession, beating occasionally on their instruments. The drums are also played at nightfall and at the first birdsong in the morning.

[764] 1. In the Bugoyi the umuse, or protector, removes from the hut of the deceased the main post upon which the dead owner liked to lean, the piece of wood (umusego) which stands at the head of the bed, the log that was used as a chair, and the small piece of wood that surmounted the roof of the hut. All of this is laid upon the grave.

644 484 Appointed cowherds lead before them a small herd of milk cows to provide for the needs of the king.

661 The passage of a prince was formerly tantamount to a disaster for the local inhabitants, who had to harbor the members of the train.

The retinue did not merely include courtiers, the royal guard, sorcerers, and the usual employees. Those dignitaries who wished to retain the good graces of the sovereign made it their business to accompany him with their numerous servants. Idlers and jacks-of-all-trades also joined the train along the way and fleeced the unlucky natives on whom they paid a visit.

This was indeed a veritable army which spared neither friend nor foe, trampling the crops in their path, looting travelers, and taking by force from the local inhabitants whatever had not been hidden in time.

[551] The men who made up the usual retinue of Kigeri IV Lwabugiri were nicknamed the "Pillagers" (1), owing to their extortions.

1. Their native nickname, Ibitsimbanyi, is a noun derived from the verb gutsimba, which means "to pillage," "to fleece."

644 768 11. For the sake of completeness, we shall cite the following two customs which the keepers of the traditions assure us were observed in the past. /498/

When the death of a neighboring sovereign, of the Uswi, Urundi, or Karagwe, was announced, the king had to leave his residence and have a new one built (1).

1. Times have changed. The choice of a site and the building of a new "palace" would present too many difficulties today. When the prince of Urundi died, the king merely spent eight days outside his habitual

644 768 home, on the advice of his familiars, in a hut that stood nearby. The sorcerers assured him that he had nothing more to fear on the part of the spirits, who had been given full satisfaction by means of this trick.

643 Upon the accession of each new king to the throne, a special envoy went to the Ruzizi Valley and drew water from a spring called Zina. He took some of that water and brought it for the young monarch to drink.

The reasons for this custom, which has now fallen into disuse, have been forgotten.

Chapter 6

I. The Two Great Festivals at Court

644 796 The two most important celebrations (ibirori) take place at the official presentation of the "First Fruits," and on the day following the annual mourning period, which the king and his court must observe.

This latter feast, which closes the month of June, is celebrated with the same pomp and richness. Since it will be described in the chapter dealing with honors rendered to the spirits of the royal dead, we shall discuss here only the festival called "First-Fruits" festival.

In their enthusiasm and admiration for Ruganzu II, the
173 Victorious, the Banyarwanda go so far as to credit him with almost
824 every food plant or grain they possess. Special mention is made of sorghum, eleusine, and a kind of wild plant /499/ known by the name of issogi (1), owing to their importance in the local economy.

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1. The Banyarwanda prepare the stem and leaves of issogi as though it were spinach.

Their introduction into Ruanda by the great monarch is the subject of numerous tales that are more or less contradictory.

We shall cite only the best-known ones.

"A chief in the Bumbogo country, " according to one tradition, "had abducted and married Ruganzu's sister to his great dissatisfaction, and he had sworn to wreak a signal vengeance upon him. In order to appease the wrath of his royal brother-in-law, the abductor thought it best to send him envoys with gifts. Among the latter were several baskets of sorghum and eleusine, which were then unknown in Ruanda.

"The king recognized their importance and forgave the offender forthwith, but laid upon him the obligation of bringing one basketful of each plant to the capital every year. The king distributed the first consignments among the chiefs and advised them to plant them and watch over their growth. "

According to another version, Ruganzu was passing through the Bumbogo when he saw an ant (imonyo) dragging a handsome grain along the path. He pointed this out to one of his followers. "Look at this ant, " he said. "Let's see what it is holding in its mouth. " The Banyarwanda had never seen a grain like that one.

The king ordered it to be preserved with care.

Upon his return to the capital he had it planted in the ground. Six months later a handsome ear was harvested, and its grains were sowed anew. Two years later the harvest was such that the precious grain could be distributed to a number of persons. The cultivation of this cereal, which /500/ was given the name of sorghum, soon spread throughout Ruanda.

On another occasion when Ruganzu was traveling across the same land of Bumbogo, he suddenly stopped before a hut from which there emanated a delicious cooking odor. "What could be the food that gives forth such a delicious aroma?" he exclaimed. The woman of the household invited the prince to come in, uncovered the pot, and showed him the famous issogi plant (spinach) that she was cooking

173 with beans. Ruganzu was pleased with the discovery and congratulated the cook. He was shown a few of the plants, and he had some of their seeds gathered.

Others add that the woman in question presented him on the same occasion with the first sorghum bread he had ever seen, hence the thought of introducing the cultivation of that grain plant into his kingdom.

Whatever the authenticity of these details may be, the truth
796 is that the "first fruits" festival (umuganura, kuganuz' umwami) is celebrated every year at the capital to commemorate the introduction of sorghum, eleusine, and the spinach-like plant into Ruanda. It was usually celebrated in February or March for eleusine, and in May for sorghum; to each occasion the famous plant was added. Over the last few years, eleusine, sorghum, and spinach have been brought at one time to the capital for a single ceremony. In the Bumbogo a special family is in charge of cultivating the field where the grain destined for the court is harvested.

This function is transmitted from father to son. At sowing time the appointed keeper of the field goes and asks the king for the hoe that will be used to break the ground.

When this envoy appeared at court, the king was supposed to have him struck three times, according to custom.

The reason for this curious practice is unknown.

The man left with his hoe during the night. Once the harvest /501/ was concluded, the same people /sic/ returned to the capital to fetch the special basket (igitenda ch' imikondo) in which the sorghum or eleusine was carried. The basket was placed on a litter
[661] (ingobyi). Those who walked in the procession enjoyed the privilege of robbing and looting the people they found along the way.

The story tells that they did not hesitate to make use of this
796 privilege in the old days, but that for some time things had improved,
661 and with good reason. The chiefs whose territory they crossed at night were compelled to treat them well because they were the king's men. Needless to add, they were always ready to indulge in revelry when the opportunity arose. Once arrived at the capital they were allowed by custom, it seems, to handle the Batutsi roughly and to

796 661 throw cow bones into their face. This is no longer the case, and times have changed for the better. An evolution of ideas has taken place under European influence. Since these men are no longer inviolate, their behavior has necessarily become less brutal.

796 They were immediately received by the king, who asked them into his hut to the exclusion of his usual entourage. The great chief of the Bumbogo (umutware w' intebe), of the Batsobe clan, alone came in with the king. It was he who officially presented the first fruits to the sovereign. Precautions were taken so that no one might come near the grain destined for the king. Carefully selected slaves or servant girls threshed the stalks at night far from all unhallowed glances. Then they had the task of crushing the grain before the eyes of the monarch. They worked with the most meticulous cleanliness, that is to say, without spitting into their hands or touching the flour with their unhallowed fingers.

Princes and dignitaries live in perpetual fear of poisoning and spells, hence the numerous measures /502/ and strict watchfulness observed in these circumstances. When enough flour had been obtained to make bread (umutsima), another slave girl took it and immediately prepared it.

The dough was ceremoniously taken to the king, who removed a piece from it with his fingers. He brought it first to his forehead, then to his chest, and then took it to his mouth. The chief who was present did the same. This ceremony was carried out in silence. The men who had brought the first fruits also offered the monarch some stalks of issogi, which is, as we have seen, one of the most important plants (imbuto nkuru).

[262] It must be remembered that the Banyarwanda cannot eat sorghum bread or eleusine bread alone because it is too dry.

They usually eat it, therefore, with a mouthful of beans cooked along with this sort of spinach. The latter lends the beans a flavor which is highly esteemed by the natives. This is what gave the plant a choice place among other foods.

796 264 It was customary for the men who had taken part in the procession to be rewarded. A bucket (umuvule) was filled with milk, and another with beans that were only half cooked.

796 These were topped with rancid butter as though it were a special 264 treat.

The intended goal was to stuff the bearers of the first fruits.

The poorly cooked food was digested slowly, and meanwhile the eaters proved to the spectators, with their rounded stomachs, that they had been treated royally (ngo n' ishimo).

It is said that in the old days the guests were not allowed to leave the royal enclosure without having finished their Pantagruelic repast. They ate before the amused eyes of a delirious crowd which plied them with jeers and gibes. Nor were they allowed /503/ to leave the premises in order to relieve nature. "As a result," add the narrators, "the court looked more like a stable."

Yet the guests could consider themselves fortunate if their appetite was not stimulated with blows. It seems that at the present time these customs have lost some of their grotesque and brutal character.

Not only did the court familiars and neighboring inhabitants take part in those festivities, but so did the great chiefs and their retinues. Sacrifices followed upon dances and shows given by clowns and snake charmers.

There was also the presentation of the sacred cows (inyambo), which was to many people the most important part of the festivities. To those who know the Batutsi as professional herders, there is nothing surprising about this part of the program.

II. The Existence and Presentation of Sacred Herds

233 In speaking of sacred cows, our study would remain incomplete if we were not to say a few words about the attachment which the Banyarwanda, Bahutu, and Hamites demonstrate for their cattle.

Cows are cherished by everyone, without exception. Meticulous and often ridiculous care is lavished upon them. The Blacks of Ruanda stop at nothing to obtain cattle. A Muhutu /Bahutu/ will fawn upon his chief for many years, if necessary, in order to obtain one. He will bear the inclemencies of the seasons, undertake long journeys, perform endless drudgery, and sacrifice his crops to

233 attain his end. The loss of a cow is regarded in much the same way
as that of /a member/ of the family. Numerous are the suicides
among Batutsi who do not believe that they can survive royal disfavor
or an epidemic that is decimating their herds.

[237] Everything cows yield is highly valued, /504/, their flesh,
their hide, their milk, and even their dung, which has many uses.

Every self-respecting woman who can afford it must dress in a
[291] cowhide. This skirt is part of the trousseau at the time of marriage
and is passed on from mother to daughter until it is worn out. As for
234 milk, it is almost exclusively chiefs' sons' food. The poor regard it as
272 a special dainty and can only covet it from the rich. It is largely
taken in curdled form. Fresh milk is not regarded as worthy of men,
but as good for children at best.

Prior to the European penetration the Banyarwanda had never
thought of boiling it, and native ideas suffered an upheaval when
the Whites were observed to cook it before drinking it. The following
[524] riddle illustrates the importance and value of milk in the eyes of
[539] the natives. Question: "What is the most improper thing, that causes
the greatest embarrassment and constraint?" Answer: "A fly drowned
in milk or sitting on the king's forehead." The impropriety is the
[687] same in both cases. Death would invariably result for a servant who
should be so unmindful as to present His Black Majesty with milk
stained by an impurity, no matter how slight. The servants in charge
of offering ceremoniously to the king the seven or eight small bowls
which he must bring successively to his lips are well aware of this
.... How many of those unfortunate people formerly paid with their
lives for a mere suspicion of impurity! It is true that those Draconian
measures were usually motivated by fear of poisoning.

262 Cow meat is a choice morsel and a true dainty, especially
for the poor, who taste it only rarely. It is also practically the only
meat permitted to women, others being taboo to them. Even cow
237 urine has its daily and current use. /505/

It is used to wash the milk pots and bowls. As for dung, it is
put to many uses: to plug up holes and cracks in the wooden kitchen
utensils, to coat hut walls in order to ward off the wind and cold,
to rub over the body for certain skin ailments, etc.

Pastoral Terms

192 233 The rich and varied vocabulary used by the Banyarwands proves the interest they take in their cattle

They have special terms to designate a black cow (inka y' umukara), a dark-brown cow (igitare), a grey one (ikijuju), a purple one (issine), a red one (umusengo), cows splotched with white, black, or yellow on a russet or grey background (ubugondo), an ash-grey cow (rwirungu), a dark-yellow one (inumba), and inka y' inyombya, the blackbird-hued cow for which the Batutsi entertain a superstitious fear.

A cowherd is called umushumba or umwungeri.

The king's cows other than the sacred cows are called insanga, which means "those that were found," from the word gusanga, "to find," because it was one of the first kings of Ruanda, Gihanga, who discovered them. They are also called by the name of ibigarama, from the word kugarama, "to stretch out," because they have long horns, etc.

Inka is the generic name for all horned beasts, cows or bulls. Inkungu is a cow without horns; inkungu z' amalegelege is a cow whose horns are loose.

The shape of the horns, their orientation, and the arch they form give rise to the following names: inkondogoro, inyabulegelege, ibibinda, impotore. Certain Batutsi cowherds burn the horns of their animals with a red-hot iron while they are still young in order to obtain the desired shape. /506/

Inka y' imbata (kwihita, "to exert oneself") is a cow acquired or bought through personal labor. It is an inalienable cow over which the chiefs have no rights whatsoever.

Inka y' igiti, cow of landed property (of the hill) received from the chief.

Inka y' impetano (guheta, ... "for the second time"). Second cow obtained from the chief.

Inka y' ubuntu, "generosity cow," or inka y' ineza "benevolence cow," a gift between relatives or blood brothers.

Inka y'ingwate (kugwatiriza), a cow which must be redeemed [422] (irichungura). The owner of a young bull makes a deal with the owner

192 of a cow whereby he gives him the animal under condition that the
233 first female calf born of this cow will be handed to him. He may
[422] even take the cow and keep it until the first calf is weaned, so long as he shares the milk with the owner of the animal over that period of time.

The term umukangara serves to designate the first heifer born under this agreement.

Inka y' inkungurano (kugurana, "to exchange"), a purchased cow. The exchange is effected against a sterile cow or two young bulls, some 20 goats or about 30 basketfuls of beans.

Inka y' inkwano (gukwa, "to buy a wife"), cow given as a bride price to acquire a wife.

Inka y' indongoranyo (kulongoranya, "to help establish a house-
[583] hold"). This term serves to designate the animal that well-to-do
[585] parents present to their daughter on her wedding day. They also supply her with her trousseau at that time: a tanned and buttered cowhide enclosed in a basket, along with some rings of vegetable fiber, two mats for the bed, a supply of butter, etc., to provide for the early needs of the young couple.

192 Inka y' ichari (umwari, "young wife"). This expression /507/
designates the cow offered by the parents-in-law upon the birth of
233 their first grandson. The son-in-law must present a few jugs of beer
431 to his wife's parents along with his son. He is given a cow or heifer
844 in return.

The father-in-law usually takes into account what he received at the time of his daughter's marriage. If his means are moderate, as are those of most Bahutu, he merely gives a young bull or a few hoes (1).

1. In such cases the young bull is designated by the name of igishito or uluhanderw' inka, "the side (that is, half) of a cow."

The gift offered in these circumstances rightfully devolves

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[844
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to the young mother who has suffered the pains of childbirth (umuruho w' umubyeyi). Her parents compensate her in this fashion for her troubles and sufferings.

Inka y' indundu (kurundura, "to give unconditionally") serves to designate a cow given unconditionally, as opposed to inka y' ingwate.

Inka y' ilembo means "the cow of entry (into the new househould), " because the bride receives it as a gift from her parents-in-law when she enters her new home for the first time.

Inka y'indabukirano (kurabuka, kurabukir' umutware, "to pay an accession gift to a new chief") designates the cow given to a chief at the time of his accession to office.

Inka y' inyiturano (kwitura, kwiturana, "to pay a debt of gratitude") designates the cow given in acknowledgement of a kindness.

Inka y' inturano (gutura, "to offer a gift") serves to designate a cow which subjects must give to chiefs by way of a tax.

Inka y' intundano means "trade cow. " The verb gutunda means "to trade" or "to purchase through an exchange of goods, " hence the expression "trade cow. "

Inka y' ingororano (kugororera, "to reward") designates /508/ a cow given as a reward for a favor done.

Inka y' inyibano (kwiba, "to steal"), a stolen cow.

Inka y' ibihembo, "a cow given in payment as salary, " for example, to pay for two years of consecutive work.

Inka y' amahugu (guhuguza, "to deceive"), a cow obtained through trickery.

Inka y' umuheto ("bow"), a cow obtained by force.

Inka y' isaso ("bullet") is the generic name for the cows of the Europeans, who have taken over the land.

Inka z' indemano (kulema, "to create"), cows given by the king or by a great chief to someone they wish to honor or to raise above other men by providing him with a herd that will make him safe from want.

192 233 Inka z' inkuke (gukuka, "to come out of, " "to come from") serves to designate cows which are merely in one's keeping.

Milk cows are always placed at the disposal of the chief, who never lacks milk.

Inka z'intarama (a term peculiar to the Bugoyi /region/), cows that are milked late in the morning and in the evening.

Inka z' imigogoro (imiruho), cows ("who cause trouble") because they often die or bring other worries to their owners, who are taxed on their milk.

Inka z' inyambo (indende), "cows of imposing size."

Inka z' ingegene, "ordinary cows."

Inka z' inyagisanze, "cows who graze in pastures which are always green."

Inka z' intahira (gu-ta-hira or gu-ta-gemura), "cows whose owner has full rights over them and is not subjected to any bondage toward his chief on their account.

[517] Inka z'imilizo, "cows with a (short) tail." The Batutsi sometimes shorten the tails of their heifers for esthetic reasons. /509/

Inka z' inkuku, "cows of small size."

Ikimasa, "ox"; impfizi, "bull"; ubukombe, "a bull in his prime" or one whose services are highly valued, hence the wish and expression, Ukagir' ubukombe! "May you own a fine bull!"

Inyana, "calf"; ishashi, "heifer"; imbyeyi, "mother cow"; inka y' issave or urubereri, "cow who has never calved"; ingumba, "cow who has become sterile"; inka y' issugi, "cow who never lost a calf"; iliza, "cow who has calved at least once"; ijigija, "cow who has calved many times"; inka y' ubusuri, "cow who lost a calf"; insindirano, "cow who is given the calf of another"; amabuguma, "old beasts," etc.

192 234 Fresh milk is called amata y' inshyushyu; curdled milk, ikivuguto; the milk of a cow who has just calved, umuhondo; the milk of a cow who is pregnant again, amasitu; fresh milk mixed with water, umwerera; one night's milk, umubanji; whey, amachunde or amenda, etc.

Sacred Cows

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778 The idea for this select group is traced back to Ruganzu. These special herds are known as inyambo, or long-horned cattle, and they are always selected among the finest in the land. They are not all of the same color.

[822] Among other hues, the following predominate: dusty red (ibihogo by' issine), purplish red (ibihogo by' igaju), red speckled with white (ibihogo by' imyeru), and black and white, which are all favorite colors of the Batutsi.

Special cowherds are in charge of watching over those herds, which usually graze in the Buganza.

They are led to the capital for festivals or public celebrations. The finest animals, known as inyamibga or indatwa /510/ (from the word kurata, "to show off"), lead the herd.

[824] [535] There is usually only one or two of these in each herd, and they are accustomed to walking ahead of the others. Their horns, brow, and neck are covered with rows of beads and small antelope horns which serve as ornaments (imitako n' imiheha). Also included are stems of the sacrosanct umwishwa grass, which the cowherds also wear on chest and head on numerous occasions. Then special dances take place which are organized by the keepers of the herd or even by the Batwa and in which the animals participate with their mooing.

The cows are quite familiar with this kind of sport, and they seem to take an interest in it and watch the motions of the dancers. The latter emit special guttural cries all the while, in order to excite the animals further.

Performances of this sort are highly esteemed by the Banyarwanda and attract large crowds.

After the celebration the sacred cows return to their Buganza pastures. Their keepers treat them with great care and are the only ones permitted to milk them, just as they are the only ones to drink their milk.

The calves are gorged with milk and weaned quite late.

[262] Although the Banyarwanda are extremely fond of meat and even eat animals who died a natural death, they are strictly forbidden

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778 to taste the flesh of the ndatwa, or long-horned cows who walk in the
262 lead of the sacred herds (inyambo).

This exception to the rule illustrates the importance given to the cows in that category.

In order to make sure that this prohibition is heeded, the
[278] keepers allow the rumor to spread that crocodile blood (ingona), which is regarded as a dangerous poison, is used to rub the favorite cows (indatwa). /511/

III. Exhibition of the Objects in the Royal Treasure

644 Let us mention further that on the occasion of those two im-
543 portant solemnities, the objects in the royal treasure (intore) are exhibited. They include beads of all kinds, necklaces, bracelets, fabrics, small carved bones (intimba), and elaborately worked colobus pelts (inkomo). It seems that prior to the Ruchunchu disaster (1896), when most of the pieces belonging to the famous treasure disappeared in the flames, the collection was so outstanding for its (strictly indigenous) richness and variety that it could hardly be enumerated. It had to be replaced piece by piece.

Only a few colobus pelts and a few lengths of fabric survived
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543 the disaster. The most ancient "loincloths" harked back to King Gahindiro whose reign must have ended somewhere between 1840 and 1850! They had been preserved all along with zealous care, for they were regarded as very valuable for the period.

They were designated by the name of impwijima, owing to the character of the striped and streaked fabric.

The kings of Ruanda had obtained them through the good
[648] offices of the princes of the Karagwe and Usui, with whom they had entertained amicable relations from time immemorial.

Frequent exchanges of brides from court to court were instrumental in maintaining a certain amity between them. It will be recalled that Ruganzu ran away to his paternal aunt, Nyirabunyana, wife of the potentate of theKaragwe, who was then Ndagara and who had succeeded a certain Luhinda. Because of their proximity to

543 292 Lake Victoria, the kings of the Karagwe and especially those of the Usui were among the first to establish contact with the Arabs and to receive fabrics from them. Their Ruanda friends benefitted from this. Since those garments were few, /the kings/ alone wore them, and they were also given /512/ the name of *imyambarabami*, "the king's vestments." Upon the death of a king his garments were put away and became part of the treasure. Although they wore cloth from that time onward, the kings of Ruanda did not forsake the national costume called by the name of *inkindi* and made of one or two colobus pelts (*inkomo*), well tanned and elaborately worked. Those pelts were collected and entrusted to the keepers of the treasure (*abanyabyuma*), trustworthy men who were preferably chosen among chiefs or the prince's favorites. Those employees had to see to it that the belongings of dead kings were properly cared for. Those garments were beginning to pile up in the wardrobe when the revolution which overthrew King Mibambge-Rutalindwa, appointed successor of Lwabugiri-Kigeri, broke out.

The fire which consumed the huts where the royal furnishings had been stored destroyed practically everything.

It has since been attempted to build up a new treasure by choosing new lengths of fabric bought from merchants, this being now an easy proposition.

Colobus pelts were tanned to replace the old ones. The present king has secured beads, bracelets, necklaces, etc., of various sorts. They are faithfully displayed with great solemnity before the royal hut, which stands at the heart /*fond*/ of the first outer courtyard, at the time of the two great festivals.

It should not be assumed that this is mere ostentation, a simple display of riches.

Of course, the kings are far from insensitive to this vainglorious exhibit of antiquated frippery and trinkets, which to them were supreme artistic riches. This, however, was not all. This display
543 769 also had the purpose of gaining the good graces of dead princes. To this end, several individuals were selected among those present to recall their memory. They were made to dress in the old or new colobus pelts /513/ which had belonged, or were supposed to have

543 belonged, to the deceased monarchs. Then they danced in honor of 769 the "spirits" of dead kings on the grounds before the king's house. While moving about, they repeated in unison, "These are your treasures (intore), those that belonged to you. They are truly yours, those garments, those fabrics, those weapons, those beads, etc. It is in your name that we carry out these celebrations. We always remain your subjects, your lieges, your servants"....

(Tor' ibintu byawe, intore zawe; n' ibirori byawe, n'abagaragu bawe.....) When the ceremony is over, the keepers of the treasure store the objects away until the following festival (1).

769 The festivals and celebrations are almost invariably of a sacrificial character in the sense that the ancestral spirits are commemorated and are offered gifts in a fictitious or even a real fashion, as we shall see in the pages that follow. We shall discuss funeral 766 customs or, more exactly, those that apply to the death of the king,

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1. Among the original pieces included in the royal museum, there is the garment (inkindi) of the king of Urundi, Mutaga, who was killed in battle near Mwurire hill in the province of Bwana-Mkali. It is a hide, since no other garments were worn at that time, and it is altered almost beyond recognition in spite of the rancid butter with which it is constantly rubbed to preserve it. It is one of the rare trophies of victory that survived the fire caused by the Ruchunchu disaster. It is called by the name of ntizihishw' amabuno, that is to say, "that (garment) which is too short (for size)." The native expression is stronger and shows that the Banyarwanda wit never flags in situations tragic or comic. [522]

766 since in this restricted work we must try to limit ourselves, whenever possible, to the practices followed at the capital. The contrast will seem rather sharp, owing to the purely spatial proximity in these pages of the celebrations we have just described and the funeral rites observed at the death of a sovereign. To the Blacks, however, it would not seem so, in view of the constant contact they entertain with /514/ their dead and the participation they grant them in the life of the household (1).

1. Funeral ceremonies are very intricate, even for other members of society, and vary according to age, sex, the status of the individual, and the circumstances of his death.

They demonstrate the anxiety of the Banyarwanda to remain in contact with their dead, an anxiety inspired "by the belief in the power of those spirits, on whom health, prosperity, and life itself depend" .... (Levy-Bruhl, *La Mentalité primitive* /Primitive Mentality/, p. 76.)

Chapter 7

Funeral Rites. Royal Tombs and Sacred Groves. Mummification of Corpses Under the Action of Fire. Honors Rendered to Ancestral Spirits. Hierogamies. Assignment of a Day of Rest in Memory of a Royal Prince.

I. Special Customs Observed at the Time of a Royal Funeral

In Ruanda the death of a king occasions intricate ceremonies, 766 including numerous regulations that seem to date from far back in the past. It appears that the Batutsi monarchs borrowed from the ancient autochthonous princes (*abahinza*) the majority of their funeral rites, and more especially mummification, or "smoking," since this is what it actually amounts to, as well as the choice of the resting place and the jealous care with which the royal cemeteries are guarded (2).

2. The royal cemeteries where the aboriginal Bahutu petty kings were buried are still to be found in many provinces of Ruanda and especially in the Kingogo. The Hamites borrowed other things from the vanquished and subjected autochthonous inhabitants. We have already seen that the drums at the capital recall the memory of the tiny principalities subjected by the Hamites and that they are regarded as trophies of victory and as guarantees for the preservation of the present kingdom. Those same instruments have retained their role and their importance among the Batutsi.

767 There follows a brief descriptinn of these matters as given by laymen, since the appointed royal undertakers (*abanyamugogo*) maintain the strictest silence on the subject. /515/

1. How a King Dies, According to Popular Belief

643 In Ruanda a monarch is such a superior and respected being that in the mind of most Bahutu he could not possibly be born, live, and die like the common run of men.

643 Hence the following beliefs, to which the common people have given credence up to now.

In principle, in the old days the sovereign was not permitted
644 to see his heir. The child was entrusted to the care of reliable men
855 and raised far from his father, who occasionally was brought pieces of
string which had served to measure the height and waist of his future successor. In order to judge the development and strength of the young prince, the king imprinted the outline of his own foot in a basket of sorghum flour. This was brought to the crown prince, who in turn left in it the imprint of his foot. The basket was returned to the king, who never lost interest in the physical development of his child.

Bows were later sent to him so that he might try his strength. The heir was considered worthy of the throne on the day when he was able to string his father's bow, since now he had become as strong as his father.

The last verifications were made. It was necessary to make
643 sure that the king's garment fitted him perfectly, and that the im-
762 print of his feet matched exactly that of his father's. The latter, on
the other hand, having grown old and noticed that his beard and hair were greying, (yamez' imvi), decided himself that his time had come. He immediately called his confidants and made known his last wishes. "I am going to depart (gutabara); there are only a few moments left to me. You shall see to it that my son rules (kwimika) in my place. You shall obey him in all things"....

The same evening the appointed sorcerers presented him /516/
[278] with hydromel (inkangaza) in which they had mixed a violent poison,
purchased, it is believed, on the shores of Lake Victoria, where it was prepared with putrefied crocodile flesh.

The king went to sleep and never awakened. "He has drunk" (yanyone), as they said in official terminology, or else "He has departed" (yatabaye), he has rejoined his ancestors, the Liberators, who saved the land, "He has ceded the throne" (yatanze), "The sky has fallen", (ijuru ryaguye), for such are the expressions still consecrated by usage and used to proclaim this serious event.

643 There must have been few kings who benevolently left this life of their own accord.

Popular belief has accepted too many fables on the subject. It was still said recently that Queen Mother Nyiramavugo, a grandmother of King Lwabugiri who must have died around 1860, was the first to refuse the poison when old age drew near in spite of the dictates of custom and tradition. "Since that day," say the common people, "the Abiru, or keepers of the customs, who are in charge of this task and duty have not dared mention it anymore to kings and queens."

2. The Corpse of the Royal Dead is "Smoked"

766 "When a king died," the same people go on, "two Batutsi from important families were seized and killed forthwith near the body."

643 This was called "to make the king's pillow" (guseguril' umwami). Those men were given to him to accompany and serve him in the spirit world.

[641] A subject counts for nothing while the king is all important. It is proper, therefore, to send him at least two men chosen from the highest social stratum.

"They did not dare observe this rite," add the narrators, "at the death of the last king, Lwabugiri (in 1895)." /517/

When a queen mother died, two great ladies of the same
(Mututsi) /Batutsi/ race were sacrificed. It is the Banyamugogo, or
[767] "men with the big (mourning) log," who are in charge of funeral
ceremonies. They make up the royal corporation of undertakers, al-
though their name does not indicate this outright. They are called
"men with the big (mourning) log," owing to the custom which de-
mands that a wooden log be burned for three or four days after the
[824] death of an individual. For this purpose, one deliberately chooses
a green log of red-bloom erythrina (umuko), a symbolic tree that
recalls the death of Ryangombe, the alleged founder of the famous
secret society of initiates (imandwa).

The body of the dead king is transported from his last home,
[823] which will henceforth be called Gisozi ("Big hill") (1), to one of the

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[823]

> 1. This expression "big hill" is readily understood by the natives, because it serves to designate the spot where a reigning monarch drew his last breath.

sacred groves (2) reserved for royal tombs by custom or tradition.

[778]

> 2. We owe the reader an explanation of the expression "sacred grove, " which will recur frequently. The word "sacred" is taken here in a broad and technical sense to mean that these groves are set aside and closed to laymen, who may not enter them. They are guarded by official watchmen, who see to it that the grounds are properly respected.

The Banyamugogo, who become the temporary masters of the area, have a large hut built and enlist for its construction the services of neighboring people.

There the remains of the sovereign are sheltered and laid upon a grid in the middle of the hut, about 1. 50 meters above ground. The members of the corporation keep a fire burning under the grid for several days in order to dry out the corpse and prevent it from putrefying.

The body, which lies on a bed of skins, is constantly moved so that the heat from the fire may reach all its parts. /518/

The keepers of the hut take turns without interruption, day and night, by the fire they must maintain. Meanwhile, no layman may come near the place under penalty of death.

The undertakers keep up their work until, according to
[775
825] popular belief, the corpse gives birth to a leopard, which is at first

166 643 [775 825] only a small worm (1). Then a pit is dug in the same hut. The royal

1. Permit us to repeat once more that we are putting ourselves in the position of the natives. We are merely repeating their tales and beliefs.

remains are laid at the bottom of the tomb on a new bed of grass covered with precious skins: lion, leopard, and antelope hides.

The body is completely isolated from the ground, which must not soil it. The whole thing is covered with special mats (ibirago by' ibisunyu) made of lake reeds. Finally, the pit is filled up (2).

2. When a king named Yuhi ascends the throne, according to another popular belief, the undertakers have to perform another duty toward the deceased king in addition to what has already been said on the subject.

After having been smoked, the completely desiccated body (umwite) is carried to the sacred grove of Muhima, below Kigali. The pall bearers dig at the spot called Nyamvura ("the rain spot"), where there formerly existed an equally sacred spring, and lay the body in the hole for a moment.

This is called "giving the king a drink (guhira)."

Then the body is brought back to the royal cemetery. His

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successor may henceforth rule in
peace, and abundance will reign
in the realm, for the various
formalities on which the prosperity
of the land depends have been
carried out.

3. Popular Beliefs Concerning the Survival of the King

643 825 "The undertakers," the narrator goes on to say, "cannot leave the site of the grave yet.

"They are not permitted to leave it until the end of the mourning period, which lasts at least four months. The above-mentioned worm /519/ 'must' come out of the corpse's right hand after a while. It is immediately picked up by the keepers, who put it in a vessel full of milk.

"When the container becomes too small, the animal is put in a large jar into which milk is poured every day. The worm soon 'sprouts legs'; it will soon change shape. The jar is no longer adequate, and a tub (umuvule) is provided and also filled with milk. The thing becomes a leopard. It is still fed milk until the day when its carnivorous instincts awaken and it begins to use its claws. Then it is given fresh meat. It must be tied, for it has become 'mean' (irakaliha). The animal manages to break its first bonds, woven of banana-tree bark. It is tied with new ficus ropes, which are soon broken in turn.

"In order to chain the beast, a piece of wire (umukwege) is brought from the royal court (ibgami), where messengers keep going incessantly to report on the whole affair.

"The day comes when the wild beast wounds one of its keepers. Another one soon meets with the same fate, and a third dies of his wounds.

"The situation has become intolerable and cannot go on.

"The leopard, anxious to gain its freedom, grows fierce. Finally, permission is given to grant it freedom, thus releasing the Banyamugogo from an impossible task.

643 "A sensible man," the narrator added as he closed his tale,
825 "cannot believe in such things. As for myself, I am only repeating what I have heard around me."

The "sacred groves" often serve as lairs for leopards, who take advantage of the rainy season, when the sorghum has grown tall, to comb the countryside /520/ for prey. Furthermore, the leopard is the totem of the king, who formerly appropriated all leopardskins for his own personal use. Many common people, therefore, believe in these fables. In the capital, where no one is taken in by such childish tales, nothing is done to enlighten the people. The undertakers, who maintain the strictest silence about their own functions, stand only to gain by exaggerating the wondrous aspects of the matter in order to acquire increased importance in the eyes of their fellow men. One can imagine the prestige that surrounds the king, a prestige that is mixed in with a large amount of superstition and that causes him to be revered on a par with a demigod by most of his subjects.

4. Duties and Privileges of the Undertakers

643 The task of burying or, more accurately, mummifying (gwosa,
767 gwosereza) the sovereign is entrusted as we said to a special corporation known by the name of Banyamugogo, that is to say, "the men with the big (mourning) log," who belong to the Abiru clan. This is the special clan whose members are responsible for preserving the memory of customs and traditions. The royal undertakers have no duties other than the funerary ones and enjoy rare privileges. No chief may attack or pillage them, for they live under the king's protection.

They are not subjected to forced labor, nor do they pay taxes. On the other hand, they are strictly forbidden to come to court and to appear in the presence of the prince. If they have to plead a case before him, they may at best set out on the path to the capital, but they must stop at a good distance from it. There they build a large fire into which they toss fresh cow dung in order to create thick clouds of smoke /521/ and to draw attention upon themselves. Meanwhile they delegate men to present their complaints and grievances.

643 Then the king appoints one or two chiefs to go and settle their
767 difficulties.

In the old days these undertakers could not visit with their
fellow men, nor could they eat or drink with them. Even today, when
[415] invited to feast with their neighbors, they must bring with them their
own drinking tube. It is maintained that they do not eat with their
children. If it came to pass that the latter, in turn, should bury a
new king, they would have to leave their parents and never see
them again.

A special vocabulary is used to speak of the monarch and
[198 certain of his acts. It would be most disrespectful to say that the king
644] sleeps, drinks, eats, etc., like anyone else. We have already seen
how his ailments and his death are mentioned (yaberamye, yanyoye,
yatabaye, etc.).

It is for the same reason that the royal undertakers bear a name
767 that recalls their function only in a very indirect way. Just as they
644 are strictly forbidden to go to the capital, custom forbids the king to
643 go through areas inhabited by members of this corporation or to camp
there. He must avoid the sacred groves where the spirits of his
ancestors rest, as though the idea of death could shorten the life of
the sovereign. It is mandatory to his followers to avert that image
and thought from his eyes and from his ears, which are those of a
demigod well above common mortals.

He must be enabled to enjoy this life and all its pleasures in
peace.

5. Mourning Rites Observed at the Death of a Prince

643 The king is mourned for four months, that is to say, until the
765 official accession of his successor to the throne. During /522/ that
period of time, cohabitation between spouses is theoretically forbidden.
Bulls are also separated from the herds at the time of this terrible
misfortune, which causes the Banyarwanda to state that "the sky
has fallen" (ijuru ryaguye). Men and even children shave their heads
[302] as a sign of mourning.

643 All work in the fields is strictly forbidden. The chiefs were
765 in charge of this, and in order to show their zeal they would not have
hesitated to kill on the spot any wretch who would have gone so far
as to violate custom. If the fields were already plowed, one might
[689] at best sow the seeds or plant the seedlings, but the hoe could not be
used.

A stick had to be used to dig up sweet potatoes from the
[731] ground. It is not overly surprising to hear that sometimes, in the
past, famine resulted from this forced period of cessation of work.

II. Royal Tombs and Sacred Groves
(Cemeteries and Former Capitals)

1. Origin and Constitution of the Sacred Groves

766 Afther the death of a king, as we have said, his body is taken
into one of the sacred groves where a large hut is built to shelter the
778 remains and to mummify them by desiccated prior to burial.

A courtyard is also built, enclosed with ficus branches which soon take root and which later give rise to a new thicket. Once the job of smoking is completed, the keepers of the hut bury what is left of the body inside the dwelling.

They remain there for some time afterward to prevent any desecration which they believe might still be committed. When the four months of mourning are over, the house is abandoned and the door is carefully barricaded on the outside.

The hut will stand for three, four, or even five years, /523/
and will eventually fall to pieces with age without anyone worrying
about it. Before they leave, the royal undertakers plant inside the
courtyard a branch of erythrina (umwuko) in honor of Ryangombe,
the alleged founder of the secret society of initiates (imandwa),
[824] and a ficus (umuvumu) branch to recall the majesty of kingship
(ngo n' umwami) by the height of its trunk and the span of its
branches and leaves. The funeral grove is henceforth created or,
if it already existed, a further unit is added, which in time will be
one with the others.

766 The sacred groves are numerous, and it is surprising to find
778 them most everywhere, even in the most deserted areas.

Royal cemeteries and former residences are legion. There is
778 not one province in Ruanda that does not boast several of them at
least.

766 They are found even in bordering lands which were invaded
644 more than once by the Banyarwanda. Their numbers are understandable if one recalls the nomadic life of the warrior kings such as Ruganzu and Lwabugiri, who did not sleep often under the same roof. The sovereign had only to spend the night in a hut along the way for the spot to become sacred from then on. The owners had to abandon their dwelling and go elsewhere or build at the side. The ficus branches which fenced in the courtyard went on growing and created a new sacred grove (*ikigabiro*).

These groves are made up of various tree species, with the
[824] ficus usually predominating. Several types of this tree are found:
imigobge, *imilehe*, *imikobe*, *imitabataba*, etc.

The bark of the last two trees is used to make a kind of cloth
[287] which wears out rapidly (*impuzu*). Those clumps of trees, which are almost invariably green and which loom into sight here and there, contrast with the bareness of the land, /524/ especially in the Nduga, and lend it a characteristic appearance which does not lack a certain charm.

Among the sacred groves, some of which stand on the tallest hills, only eight or nine at most are known to have been used as royal burial grounds. The others mark the sites of former royal capitals and recall the successive moves occasioned by the numerous expeditions undertaken in certain reigns. They are referred to by the generic name of *ibigabiro*, or "places of distribution," from the word *kugabira*, "to distribute" or "to offer as a gift." As we can see, the term *ibigabiro*, or "places of distribution," is quite suited etymologically to the tree clumps which mark the sites of the former royal dwellings, whose owners, by virtue of their absolute ownership and power, could mete out all sorts of favors to their subjects. It was only by extension that the same name was quite wrongly applied to the royal cemeteries. Indeed, custom does not allow the popular

778 and common terms ikibira, "cemetery," imva or "igituro, "grave,"
766 to be used in this connection. In certain parts of Ruanda, owing to
644 the respect with which the king is regarded and to the reverential fear
he inspires, the Blacks use another expression which is much more accurate. One frequently hears them speak of musezero (misezero in the plural), that is to say, the place where the monarch permanently "took leave" of his subjects, from the verb gusezera, which means "to take leave."

The word umusezero is now commonly used to mean "restricted place," "guarded place," because in summer when people set fire to the tall grass, they first clear the bush from the edges of the cemeteries to protect the royal graves from fire. /525/

2. Main Royal Cemeteries

It is at Gasseke in the Nduga, about four hours from the
766 Kabgayi mission in the northeast, that one of the first "sepulchral"
groves is found where a prince by the name of Chyilima was buried.

Two monarchs by this name are known. It was during the
173 reign of the more recent of the two that the famous migration into
643 Ruanda of the "Mutes," or "Foreign men with an incomprehensible
766 language," took place. According to tradition, the one with whom
778 we are dealing here was the brother and immediate successor of
Ruganzu I, surnamed Bwimba (1), who lived long before his illustrious

1. The natives relate that the
mother of this Ruganzu late in
life married one of her courtiers
named Chenge, and Chyilima-
Rugwe was born of this union.
She did this to the great dissatisfaction
[644] of her eldest son, Ruganzu I, for
it ran contrary to the custom which
requires the queen mother to live
solely with the reigning prince.

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> The same legend adds that Ruganzu-Bwimba, considering himself dishonored, took advantage of a war in Urundi to throw himself into the midst of his enemies, and there met his death.

namesake.

To distinguish him from the other Chyilima, posterity gave the one buried at Gasseke the surname of *Rugwe*, which means "leopard," because the leopard into whose body he is said to have transmigrated after his death is still believed to inhabit the dense thicket which has grown around his tomb. This is why sacrifices are offered there almost constantly, and the appointed keeper of the place often beats a drum there. Some say that King Chyilima ruled only for a few months, others that he reigned but a few days. Hence the incessant honors meant to ingratiate his spirit... and his voracious *alter ego.* [775]

Some add that people behave in this manner toward him owing to his unfortunate death, in order to appease his anger and grief (*agahinda gashire*).

He was driven back from the west where he had been waging war, and his enemies pursued him all the way to Gasseke. /526/

Mortally wounded by one of their spears, he managed to hide in the bushes where he soon died of his wounds, forsaken by his own people. Several months went by without anyone hearing about him.

One fine day some herdsmen discovered his body (*umurangara*), which was completely dried up. They announced the news at the capital and claimed a reward.

They were encouraged to express their wishes and obtained the privilege of letting their herds graze with impunity on other people's crops in the summertime, when grass is lacking. Whatever the origin of this strange favor may be, it is a fact that until the European penetration the Batutsi and their cowherds did not hesitate to use it and abuse it, at the expense of the unfortunate Bahutu who could do nothing about it... [233]

173 As for the royal cemetery of Luhanga, which lies atop the
643 plateau of the same name, the inhabitants of the area all concur in
the belief that if King Gihanga himself was not buried there, that is
766 to say, the eminent "Creator," then at least his wife Nyirakabogo was.
778 It is probable that numerous other monarchs sleep their last sleep
there by the queen's side, but the people are not quite sure of their
names anymore.

Nor are they sure of the names of those who were buried on the neighboring Kayenzi-Bussigi plateau, where four of those cemeteries are to be found.

The names of the princes buried in the northern most cemetery are better known. The inhabitants of the area are almost unanimous in naming Kigeri-Mibambge and Nyiramavugo as being buried there. During the last European war, which had local repercussions, the natives were rightly frightened and erected huts (indaro) over their tombs where they offered numerous sacrifices. As for Queen Nyiramavugo, the elders recall seeing her corpse go by in their earliest childhood. /527/ The body was laid at the foot of the plateau for the night before being carried to the top where it was buried. This was the mother of Lwogera-Mutara, that is to say, the grandmother of the present king.

Malembo, daughter of Nyamajinya and mother of Yuhi-Mazimpaka, was buried on one or the other of the two plateaus, it is not known exactly which. One still hears of Yuhi-Mazimpaka himself and of a sister of Ruganzu, Nyirangabo, who, according to the natives, were buried in the afore-mentioned cemeteries. What is certain is that the grove which follows upon the first one starting from the north holds the remains of Kilongoro, daughter of a certain Magoma and mother of Chyilima-Ludjugira, who succeeded Yuhi-Mazimpaka.

According to present-day opinion, the sacred groves of Luhanga and Kayenzi-Bussigi are reserved exclusively for the burial of queen mothers (abanyambuto, "those of the grains"), that is to say,
[562] those who provided the heir to the throne and who reigned along
with him.

173 The best known of the royal cemeteries is that of Rutare in
643 the mountainous Buyaga area, not far from Lake Mohazi near the
766 frontier of Ruanda.
778 The existence of this resting place is traced back, rightly or
wrongly, to Ruganzu II, who is said to have been the first one to be buried there.

According to one tradition, he had himself chosen the site of his tomb on this high spot, so as to be an insuperable obstacle to the enemies of Ruanda even after his death. This tradition is seriously challenged by the inhabitants of the central province of Nduga (1).

1. Cf. Book III, The Reign of Ruganzu II.

The last two kings who were buried there and who are recalled most readily were Lwogera and Lwabugiri, the immediate predecessors of the present reigning monarch.

It is rather difficult to say for how many monarchs the sepulchral grove of Rutare has served as last resting place. /528/ The trees in the thickets, some of which are quite old, were formerly separate but eventually merged. Here and there, old trunks which marked the site of the courtyards in which the huts were built have disappeared, so that one cannot count the funerery enclosures with any exactitude. There do not seem to be more than eight or ten.

Three other royal cemeteries are found at Musenyi in the Nduga to the south of the Kabgayi mission, about two hours away. The first one stands on the slope of a hill called by the name of Mayebe. It is made up of a small wood of thorny acacia trees which have reached their maximum height and whose long intertwined branches lend a mysterious atmosphere to the grove, where a half light barely penetrates. Some other trees with thicker foliage dominate the grove. Those are the inganzamarombo (1).

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1. They are called thus from kuganza, "to overtop," and marombo, "swarms of bees," because the natives like to set their hives there.

173 643 766 778 A native village stands nearby, its banana groves bordering on the thickets. Its occupants are in charge of watching over the cemetery, which according to the opinion of the Banya-Nduga (inhabitants of the Nduga province) includes the tomb of Ruganzu II Ndori. Those who claim that his body was buried at Rutare cling to their opinion and insist that he was merely "smoked" at Mayebe. The inhabitants of the latter area; on the other hand, claim in turn that after having been mummified he was indeed buried right there, and add that this is the usual procedure. The place is quite commonly known by the name of "Ruganzu's cemetery."

According to the same interpretation, this prince alone was buried there.

Not far from Mayebe, two other small groves made up chiefly of ficus trees stand barely 300 meters apart. /529/ According to some, the corpses of several queens by the name of Nyirakigeri and Nyirayuhi were mummified there. Local people insist that they were also buried there, and support their claim by adding that the place where a king or queen is smoked is also the place where they are buried. The two clumps of trees formerly made up a single sacred grove, and this is why the natives call them by the same name.

The last of those cemeteries stands two kilometers farther. It is made up of handsome ficus trees, but the same controversies arise concerning the use to which this funeral site was put. It is called "the cemetery of the queens who bore the name of Nyiramavugo."

[123] It is not easy to give precise information on this subject. The keepers of the groves, the undertakers (abanyamugogo), and the official chroniclers (Abachur' ubgenge) are not willing to surrender all their information on the subject. The statements of other people are unreliable.

Funerary enclosures called ilaro (amalaro in the plural), or "night stopping places," are also found in the area.

They mark the sites of huts which served as shelters for the mortal remains of kings and queens in transit to the cemeteries.

The dwellings had to be abandoned after their visit, just as happens when a prince travelling through his realm stops for the night.

173 The term gisozi ("big hill") serves, as we have said, to
643 designate the place where a king died.

766 It is the augmentative of the word musozi, which means "hill"
and by extension "village." This term belongs to the /word/ class
778 prefixed by the consonant ki.

This class includes nothing but words conveying the idea of majesty, fear, etc. /530/

There are numerous groves in this category, such as those of Kigali, Musumba, Kaganza, etc.

In order to prove the truth of any pronouncement or assertion, the natives use the following phrase which alludes in metaphorical terms to the death of one or another of their sovereigns, Mb' ali jye wakuye
[539] Lwogera i Kaganza!

"Let it be I ('if I do not speak the truth' being implied here) who tore (King) Lwogera away from Kaganza (name of the place where the king died)!"

The reader must have noted that kings and queen mothers
[644] alone have been mentioned in the preceding pages. Mere wives
were entitled to no special honors after their death. They were
buried like common mortals. Queen mothers, that is to say, those
who bore the heir to the throne and then reigned with him, were
granted the same funerary honors as sovereigns.

Aside from the groves we have just described, there is also
173 mention of one at Bugarama-Ntare (i Buhurura) not far from Rukoma.
644 It is believed to be the spot where the undertakers fulfilled their usual
766 functions at the death of a queen named Nyirakigeri. The sacred
778 grove of Butare, which now only includes a few very old trees, is
thought to be the place where Nyagihaga, daughter of Ruyenzi and
mother of a Chyilima or Mutara died (1).

1. The official chroniclers do provide a genealogical list of the kings of Ruanda, with the name of their mothers and of the clans to which the latter belonged, but this cannot be fully credited. We have

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> seen that the names of the
> first kings were pure fantasy.
> The chronological order of
> several others is lacking,
> and the chroniclers do not agree
> on the affiliation of these princes.

Kaganza hill, not far from Musenyi, is thought to have been the scene of the death of Nyiramavugo, mother of Lwogera-Mutara.

When her hair began to turn white she refused to drink /531/ the traditional poison that was to bring her life to a close. King Lwogera-Mutara referred the matter to his maternal uncle, Nyamushanja, who had her strangled. She was mummified at Musenyi and buried on the Kayenzi plateau.

3. Watching of the Cemeteries and the Honors Rendered to the Spirits of the Royal Dead

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a. Watching of the royal cemeteries. Entrance to the cemeteries was strictly forbidden to laymen, who could not even come near them, as if their presence were a defilement or a profanation.

Not so long ago, at Rutare the keepers in charge of watching over the royal tombs still found it convenient to pillage and even kill the travelers who had the misfortune to wander into their neighborhood.

The functions of the keepers of royal cemeteries are almost invariably exercised by members of the Abiru or Abatsobe tribe, with whom they are identified. In summer when the tall grasses are set afire, they must see to it that the flames do not reach the restricted enclosures.

In principle it is strictly forbidden to cut wood there, and one may never go in with an axe.

[178] The keepers and the neighbors seem to have eased up a little on this rule over the last few years. Since the dead wood they were permitted to use no longer met their needs, they began to attack the

767 trees and green branches. Human conscience can adapt itself to anything.
778 The keepers, who get their share, pretend to see nothing.
178 As a result, relatives and friends take full advantage of their tacit permission and make inconspicuous forays into the groves.

b. General honors paid to the spirits of the royal dead.

769 The dead are neither forgotten nor forsaken. Superstitious fear plays its part in the cult of the dead. /532/ The Blacks' fear of the dead recalls them constantly to the remembrance of the living (1). From time to time and in important circumstances, when real or imagined calamities threaten, the drums are beaten in their honor.

Huts (*indaro*) of varying size are raised on their graves, and sacrifices performed in them to pacify and ingratiate their spirits.

At certain times, young bulls are sent from the capital and immolated by the sacrificers with pomp and solemnity.

The things most readily sent are small earthenware vessels, rounded, rather graceful, (*uruherezo*, *imperezo*), filled with banana wine, which the keepers offer as a libation to the dead kings in order to win their support.

Similar sacrifices were, and still are, performed occasionally
[778] at the sites of numerous former royal dwellings: at Lwamaraba near the Kabgayi mission, at Mwurire near the Save mission, at Lussagara near Nyaluhengeri, in honor of Lwabugiri, Lwogera, and another Mutara, a son of Ruganzu II, to mention only a few (2). /533/

1. The *muzimu* retains "the passions, tastes, inclinations, and grudges that characterized it during the material life span of the individual whose existence it perpetuates spiritually after death." (Maurice Delafosse.) To the natives, this belief explains and justifies the cult of spirits.

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2. Many of those former royal residences recall historic events which took place at the site or in the vicinity.

It was at Mwurire that Mutara I, a son of Ruganzu II, vanquished the king of Urundi, a Mutaga, whose lands extended that far at the time.

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On Ruchunchu hill, not far from a former residence of Lwabugiri's at Rubugurizo (that is to say, according to the etymological sense of the word, "at the spot where the king's sons played backgammon"), the natives point out the spot where Mibambge-Rutalindwa, Lwabugiri's appointed heir, set fire to himself and his people /relations and friends/ in 1896, in some hastily built huts, when he found himself about to be captured by partisans of the powerful Bega family who had rebelled against him. In the Bumbogo, at places called Mbilima and Matovu, some tall fiscus trees mark the site /533/ of a dwelling formerly occupied by an important chief of the Batsobe clan who had married King Lwabugiri's own mother.

The latter, having grown up, wanted to wreak vengeance for what he regarded not only as a serious infringement of court custom but also as a crime of high treason.

His warriors surrounded the hill one day.

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> Since it was impossible to escape, Chief Seruteganya set fire to himself (aritwika), the queen mother, and his two sons, Mulangire and Sebugigi.
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> Another tradition adds that Lwabugiri wanted to spare his mother, but that as she attempted to escape she was murdered by one of the sons of her second husband.

769 [609] The king treats other dead members of his family with the same solicitude. He follows the same line of behavior toward people who are complete strangers to him but whose wrath he fears. Musinga has already caused propitiatory victims to be offered several times to Kabale, his maternal uncle, who died in 1912. In order to pacify his spirit more effectively, the sacrifices took place at Mbuye, in one of the favorite former dwellings of the powerful minister. Karara, one of the many blood brothers of the present king, who died at Ruchunchu, was granted the same honors when he showed signs of discontent.

769 766 791 As a result of this belief that the dead may do harm to the living, a group of sorcerers arose to whom the king resorts when an important political prisoner is executed. Those sorcerers are called "exhumers" or "mutilators of cadavers" (ababūzi), a word derived from the verb kwabūra, "to exhume a cadaver, " for no sooner is the condemned man dead than they cut off his little right finger (umuhèra) and his little right toe (akajanja). They also take strips of flesh from the body of the victim, who henceforth will be unable to do any harm. The aim of this posthumous mutilation is called urukagiro, meaning "obstacle, " "hindrance" (from the verb gukagira, "to hinder").

Sorcerers in this category handle those human strips at some length and finally bury them in an anthill hole (umulerajuru). /534/

769 [775] c. Special honors rendered to dead kings, or hierogamies. The Blacks are convinced that the spirits of the dead retain their hatreds and passions. To humor them, therefore, is to the best advantage of the living. The means used to this end are of course

769 similar to those used to conciliate men one deals with. The spirits are presented with pleasant offerings; they are fed; they are ingratiated in many ingenious ways.

In other words, they are regarded after death as human beings who have retained their faculties for enjoyment.

We have already seen that in order to gain their good graces one offers them libations, and sacrifices, and one beats the drums in order to remind them of their royalty and to prove to them at the same time that they are still regarded as kings. This is done not only on their tombs, in the important cemeteries, but also at the sites of their former favorite residences. This last procedure is believed to be more gratifying to them.

By reason of their fear and respect, the Banyarwanda usually avoid building too close to former capitals, and keep at a distance from them. In the Bwana-Mukali in the village of Lussagara, the inhabitants of the hill bury their dead far away in the forest so as not to defile the ground that was often trod by Lwogera and Lwabugiri.

Aside from these precautions and cares, the reigning princes have set up for each of their dead predecessors a true family home with wife and servants, including even the small traditional herd, in order to honor them and to obtain their protection.

It will be recalled that Chyilima-Rugwe is believed to have reigned only a short time. As a result, it is thought that he has retained an unpleasant memory of his stay on the throne.

Moreover, he refused to leave the country (yanze kuva mu Ruanda) and continues to exist in the form of a leopard which is often seen, so the natives say.

In order to pacify /535/ his spirit, which is perennially dissatisfied (yarushije abandi gukaliha), a large hut has been erected for him at the very spot where he was buried. A keeper maintains it in good order and watches over the preservation of a herd of cows which is said to belong to Chyilima himself. A woman is in attendance on him.

[588] From time to time, a young girl is appointed by the diviner-sorcerers to be his new wife. The keeper substitutes for the dead king /in this connection/.

769 584 As a rule, the girls are sent back to their families after a short stay in the hut of the spirit, but an appointed woman must always remain there. At Idjuru, about halfway along the road leading from the Kabgayi mission to Kigali, a clump of trees marks the site of the ancient residence of King Yuhi-Mazimpaka. Legend tells us that this place was the scene of a prodigious event following the death of the prince. He had barely been mummified and buried in the Rutare cemetery when the earth began to tremble at Idjuru. While a heavy rain poured down, the sound of clashing horns (*amahembe arakomangana*) was distinctly heard. Yuhi-Mazimpaka made it known thereby that he insisted on being cared for and on having his dwelling maintained. His wishes were fulfilled. In addition to a large hut, he was granted on the spot a small herd of cows called *indoha* because their lowing is harmonious. Furthermore, a woman lives there permanently for his pleasure, not to mention his temporary wives.

At the capital, inside the royal enclosure, there are numerous huts dedicated to the spirits of former kings. Although they are used for the various services entailed by the royal way of life, those huts are also consecrated to the memory of each of the deceased monarchs. The women who occupy them, while they are part of the harem, are also regarded as wives of the sovereigns whose huts they inhabit. As far as the lesser /536/ dead princes are concerned, it is considered sufficient to raise little girls at court who are occasionally made to enter the huts (*indaro*) dedicated to the spirits. The girls are sprinkled there with lustral water (*ingwa*, "chalky water"). Their royal (deceased) husbands are satisfied with this ceremony.

769 372 In the large hut consecrated to King Gihanga, a fire is maintained night and day, in a huge earthenware jug (*intango*), which is replaced when worn out.

King Gihanga, the alleged inventor or creator of fire, bequeathed it to his son Kanyarwanda. Fire is maintained in his hut in memory of this inestimable gift. Theoretically, no one but the king may take a brand from it to light his pipe. To allow this fire to go out or to be taken by unhallowed hands might have entailed death in the old days. A group of individuals chosen from the Abiru clan are in charge of watching this fire.

769 d. The cult of Kibogo and the observance of a day of rest. 773 As for Kibogo, a brother of Ruganzu II and son of King Ndahiro, although he never ascended the throne, he is honored in a special way owing to his role as Liberator. It will be recalled that he was appointed by the diviners to save the land and bring a drought to a close. He was taken to the sky and wrapped in a cloud, and his ascension had fortunate consequences for Ruanda. Each newly elected prince builds him a separate dwelling outside the royal enclosure, so that Kibogo will truly be "at home." The hut consecrated to him is surrounded by a large and beautiful courtyard. A woman lives there and cares with her servants for the traditional herd of cows assigned to the purely theoretical "needs" of the spirits.

769 The present monarch complied with this custom by building him a home, as his predecessors did, /537/ which is altogether separate from the other dwellings and which is still designated by the name of "Kibogo's place." He even has a special drum, which emphasizes further the importance of the role he played in the past.

527 The Kibogo episode is connected with a curious practice which is still observed today in some provinces. It consists of stopping work in the fields once every five days, but in the morning only. This practice gave rise to the well-known word *chumweru*, which contains the meaning of "white" and "whiteness" and which the Christians have adopted now to designate Sunday.

On what occasion and at what time did the Banyarwanda choose this day? Some trace the custom back to Gihanga the Creator. It is not unusual, indeed, to hear on the lips of pagans the expression *Chumweru cha Gihanga*, "Gihanga's white day."

Others say that *Chumweru* was a man in Kibogo's retinue. He belonged to the Basindi clan, they add, and he lived at Ruhina, not far from the present Kabgayi mission. He was in the service of Kibogo and watched over his crops (*guhingishiriza*). He went along with his master on the day of his "ascension," carrying around his neck the small bag (uruhago) of banana-tree fiber which contained his chief's pipe and tobacco.

The cloud seized them all together.

527 As we can see, the origins of this practice are obscure. Could a trace of the Sabbath or Sunday be involved here?

The hypothesis would be fairly plausible, especially if one supposes that the Batutsi originally came from Egypt or Abyssinia.

Whatever may have been the origin of this practice, it used to be strictly observed. Many pagans who live far from European settlements still observe it today. Like their ancestors, /538/ they [821] lend it a superstitious meaning. If hail should fall on that day, they would not fail to attribute it to a supernatural punishment and to place the responsibility on those who were caught breaking the rule. "One didn't hesitate," the elders relate, "to insult the delinquents, to rob them or even to strike them if need be, and it was not unusual to be taken to task, so highly was this custom regarded."

The great chiefs also do for the dead members of their 769 families, proportionately speaking, what the king does for his own ancestors (1). Each of the huts which make up their homes, for usually

764 1. The Bega preferably take their dead to the Budaha region, which is one of their fees. The regent Kabale and one of his favorite wives, Kirumwero, were buried in the village of Ngoma, near Gatare hill. His father Lwagara had been buried at Gisunzu, not far from Munzanga, and his brother Lwibishengo at Nyamutukura. His son Nyantabana and one of his grandsons were interred at Lwasankuba.

The Banyiginya choose their burial sites in enemy country to check invasions and to wreak evil on foreigners (Abanyamuhanga).

Before it was joined to the Crown, the isle of Idjwi served as a final

764 resting place for several important members of this clan.

Other Banyiginya were buried in Urundi and in the Bugessera province, which borders on that country. The dead sons of Musinga, who number at least five or six, rest there in their last sleep.

The deceased are usually buried in a hut. In the Budaha, the owner of a hut that served as a Mwega's tomb cannot leave the dwelling until about a year later. He is forced to remain there to prevent sorcerers from digging up the body.

769 there are several, is dedicated to a spirit in whose honor they marry a woman whom they later keep or discard, depending on their whims and fancies.

Well-off Bahutu attempt to imitate the great, but their huts [343] are usually few in number. So as not to be inferior to those they emulate in their superstitions, they build around their dwelling several tiny huts (indaro) which often consist merely of two or three sticks planted in the ground and barely bound at the top by a small band. /539/

4. The Annual Mourning Period of Fifteen Days in the Month of June, Which Ends With an Important Celebration

765 The famous annual mourning period of 15 days takes place
769 during the last fortnight of the lunar month called by the native name
of Gichurassi, which corresponds approximately to our month of June.
776 In principle the king alone is supposed to go into mourning, but the
whole court joins him for the sake of solidarity. At that time, the

765 prince must cast aside his ornaments and retain only ordinary clothes.
769 No marriage ceremony may take place. Games and dances are
prohibited. Among the drums, only the Ndamutsa is heard around
796 nine o'clock in the morning.

When the mourning period is nearly over, the chiefs have beer brought in from various parts of Ruanda in preparation for the closing celebration (gukur' igichurassi, "to chase away the month of mourning"). On the eve of the day appointed for the festivities, the small drum (ishako) is heard at four different times during the night to herald the great solemn occasion. At dawn other instruments join in. Joyous shouts rise on all sides and the crowd rushes to the huge esplanade where the festival is to take place.

Continuous dancing follows, with pages and other specialists participating. The members of the Ryangombe secret society, their faces smeared with white, observe their usual ceremonies. Sacrifices are offered.

The sacred cows appear on the square and contribute in no small way to the original character of the festivities. Needless to say, beer flows freely.

As for finding out in whose honor the mourning is held, this is no easy matter. The chroniclers do not agree on this score. /540/

Some say that it is held in honor of all kings; others add that it is held in honor of a queen whose name has been forgotten. The majority state that it is observed in memory of Ndahiro.

The latter's death is said to have occurred precisely during the month of Gichurassi and in the circumstances we have already mentioned. We leave it to better informed people to cut those Gordian knots.

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King Musinga in front of the large hut which serves as his reception hall. At his right is his maternal uncle Kabale, instigator of the Ruchunchu coup d'etat.

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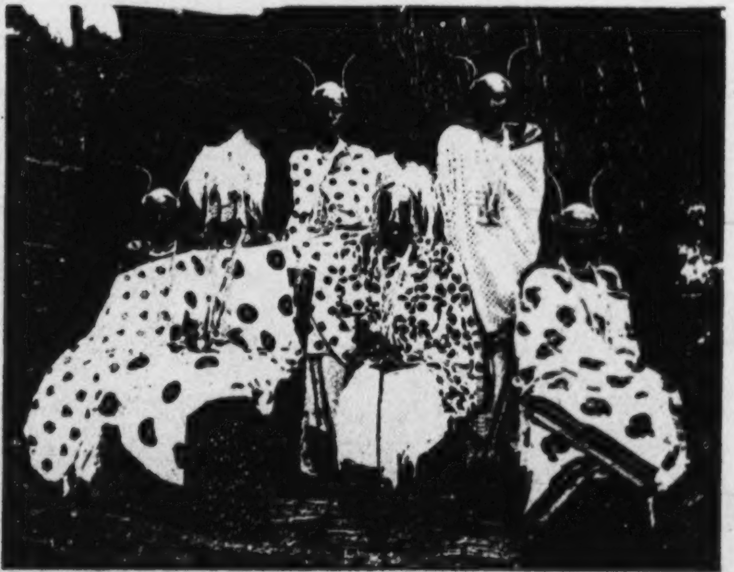

King Musinga with his mother at his right and several great court ladies.

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The king at one of his favorite diversions.

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King Musinga and some people of his entourage.

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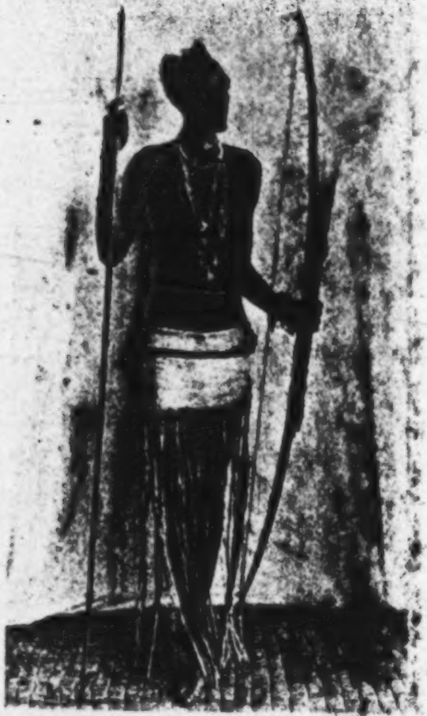

Mututsi (Batutsi) warrior in dance costume.

Nkusi, Nturo's son, in dance costume.

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Warriors in festival dress.

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Kayondo dancers.

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Dance of the pages.

Popular merrymaking. Native dance.

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High jump. Popular sport among the Batutsi.

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R. P. Van den Houdt

Lake Kivu, near Gisenyi.

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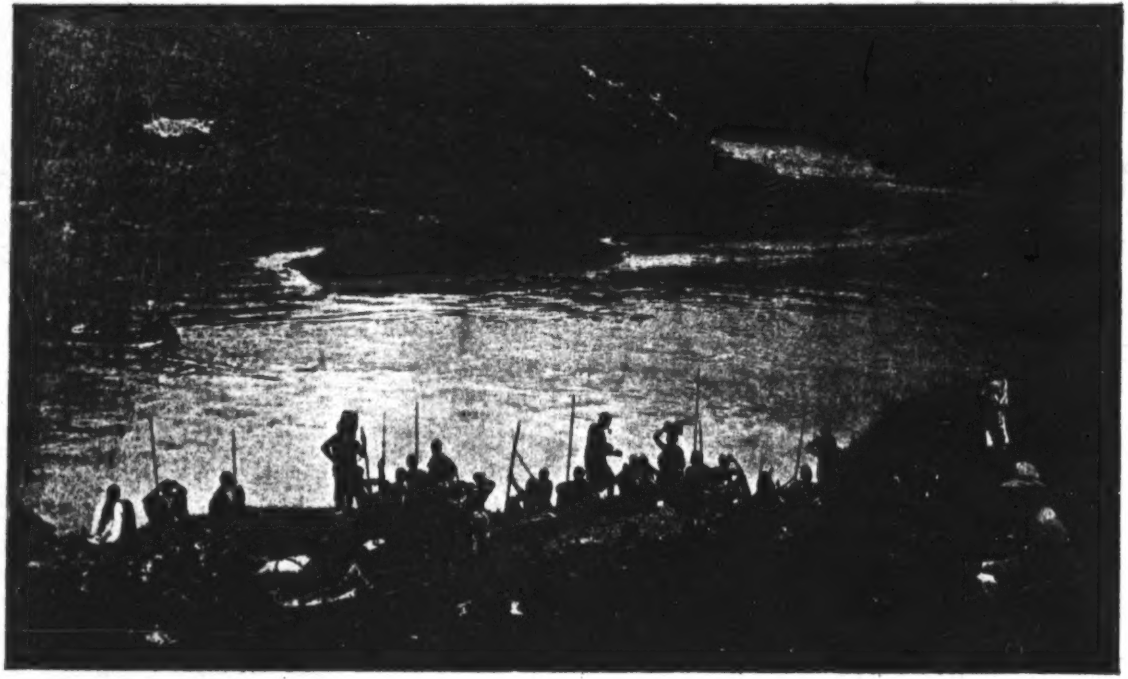
An arm of Lake Mugessera.

Rapids in the Mukungwu in the Mulera region.

On the shores of the Nzabarongo.



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A waterfall in the mountains.

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Lake Ruhondo and Bahutu types. Region of the Mulera.

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A crossing by boat.

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A volcanic landscape. The Nyiragongo and its plume of smoke.

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Muchabura and Gahinga.

Volcanic eruption of Nyamulagira. The photo was taken at night in 1907 at Nyundo mission.

Volcanic landscape. Lava from the last eruption which took place on the shores of Kivu (December 1912–January 1913).

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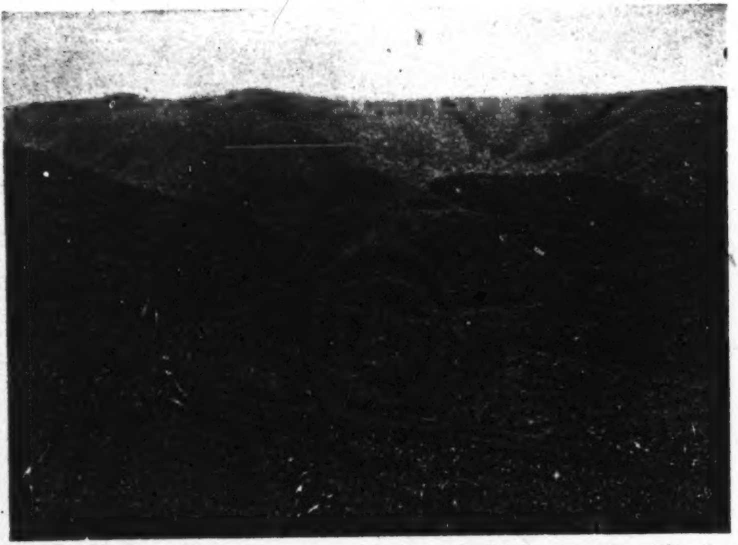

Panorama of Rulindo. The two groves which served as the last resting place for queen mothers can be seen on the heights.

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On the border between Ruanda and the Karagwe.

Acacia Spirocarpa.

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Native encampment outdoors at the foot of a large ficus.

Buffalo.

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Horned chameleons. They are found in the region of the Bugoyi.

On the plain of the Mulèra in the middle of a field of sorghum. After an elephant hunt.

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Longhorn cows.

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A ceremony in front of the kiosk dedicated to the spirits.

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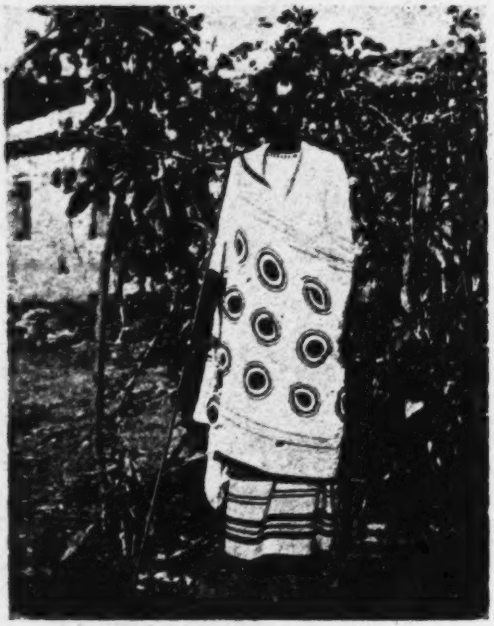
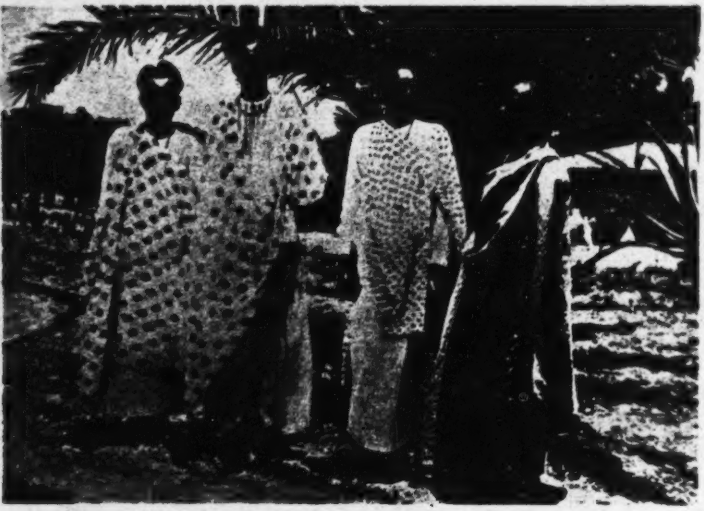
A divination scene.



Rwagataraka, chief of the Kinyaga.

Chiefs from around Kabgavi

Batutsi from Nyanza.



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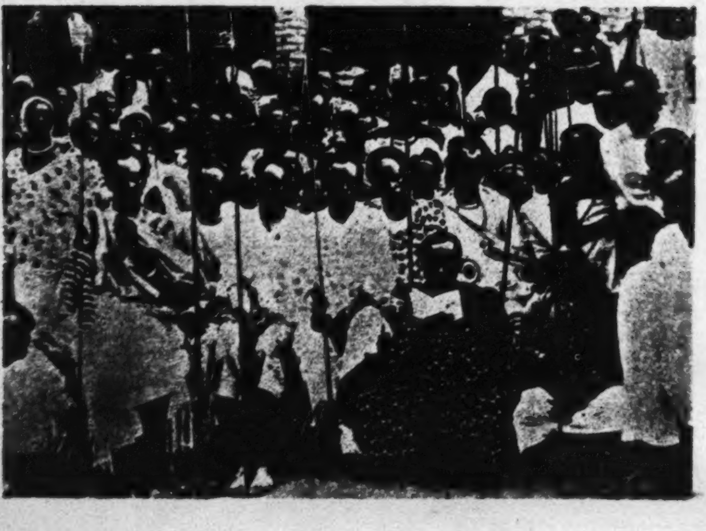
The high chiefs of Ruanda.



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Young Mututsi (Batutsi) woman carrying her baby on the back.

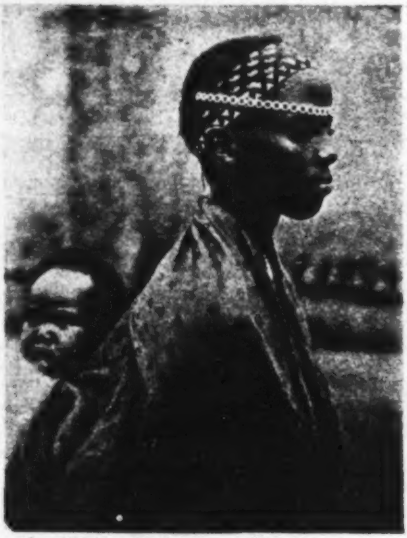


Photo by R. P. Provoost of Rulenga

Mututsi type with long tufts of hair.

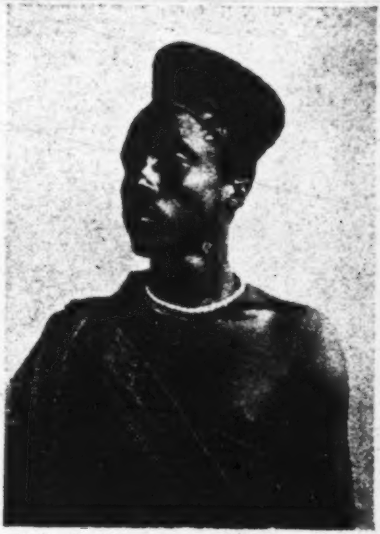
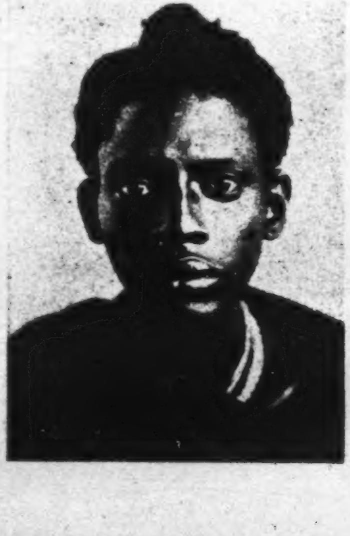
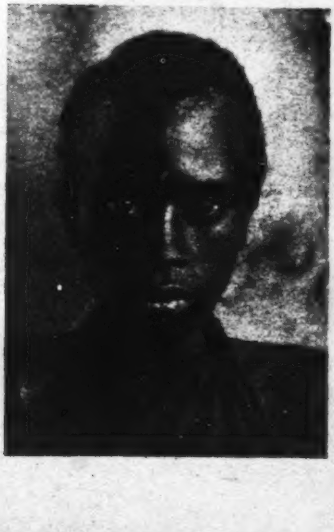


Photo by R. P. Provoost of Rulenga

Mututsi type.



Mututsi type.



Mututsi lady surrounded by her children and her feminine attendants.

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Children of the Muhutu (Bahutu) type.

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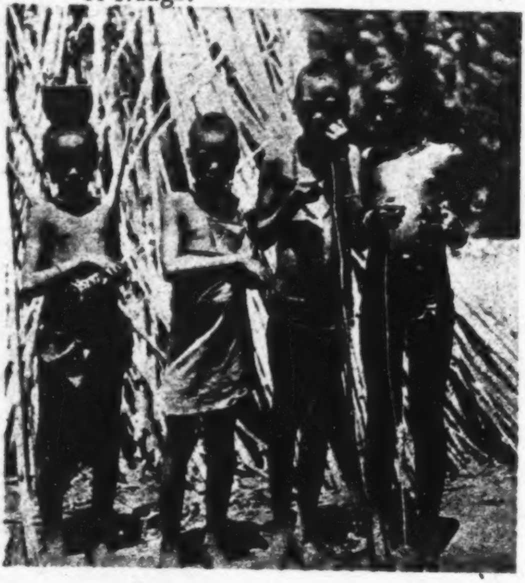
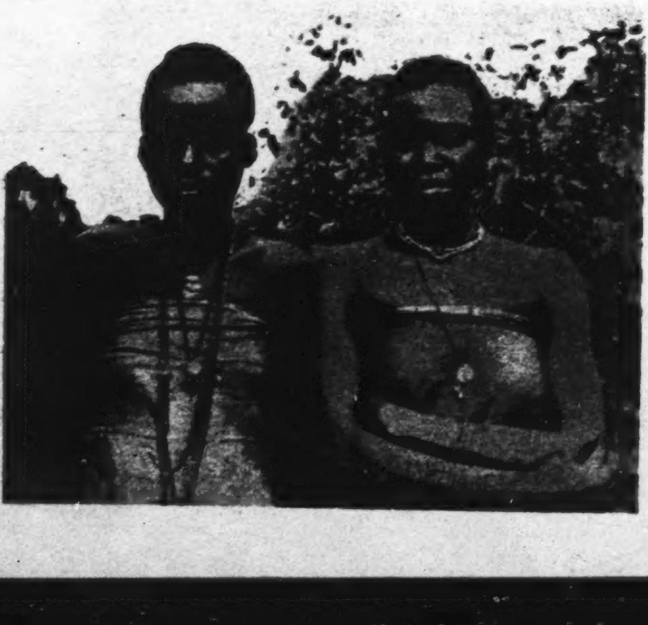
Little girls in children's dress, from the central province of Nduga.



Two young Bahutu girls.



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Children of the Muhutu (Bahutu) type. The long fringed costume they wear is made of banana fibers which they have woven themselves.

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Women of the Muhutu type.

A leper.

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Young Muhutu girl with tattooing on the back.

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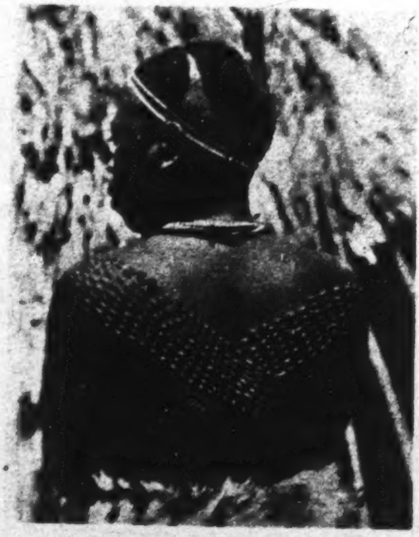

R. P. Provoost of Rulenga

Banana leaf serving as an umbrella.

A banana leaf shelters a baby's head.

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Winnowing basket serving as an umbrella.

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Umbrella of Isinde cowherds.

Family umbrella.

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A semicivilized (person).

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Blacksmiths at work outdoors. The iron ore is piled up over the hearth. The founders stir up the fire with primitive bellows.

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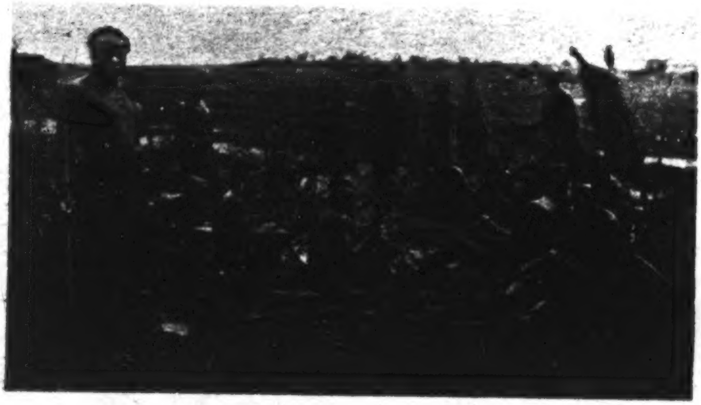

Blacksmiths around their blast furnace.

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Impalement of a cattle thief before European penetration.

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Bellows and apparatus of a primitive forge.